

THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS



CHRISTMAS NUMBER 1930

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YULE.

By DOROTHY MARGARET STUART.

WHEN Bishop Juvenal of Jerusalem fixed the Feast of the Nativity upon December 25, he must have been well aware that it would coincide with the pagan Saturnalia, the mummings and junketings with which the Romans had celebrated the winter solstice since ever Rome was. For the good Bishop lived in the middle decades of the fifth century, when the long and exciting battle between the old worship and the new was entering on its last phase, and when the man who went to lop green boughs for the decking of a Christian altar went still in peril of bringing down some hamadryad's wrath upon his head. What Juvenal probably did *not* know was what the Venerable Bede knew and recorded two centuries later, that "the ancient peoples of the Angli began the year on December 25 . . . and the very night which is now so holy to us they called in their tongue *modranecht*, that is, mother's night, by reason, we suspect, of the ceremonies which, in that long night vigil, they performed."

So deep do the roots of the race strike downward into English earth, Sir Roger de Coverley is one with the braceleted Thegn of Anglo-Saxon heathenry, and Bob Cratchit is one with Sir Roger! For all but the most proud and prosperous among the English the time of Yule was a time of dearth, discomfort, and even danger.

What did they eat, these bob-haired gentlemen in tunics of Genoa velvet or gold-pranked baudekin? Into what sauces did those butterfly-coifed ladies abstain from dipping their delicate fingers too deep? Peacock and buzzard, swan and crane, in all the pomp of their plumage, silver, russet, or pied, would grace the board at Yule; and the grinning boar's head would be borne in with its crown of sweet grey rosemary; but there would be little, if any, fresh meat, and to dissemble the ill savour of beef kept long in barrel, sharp spices had been brought over many a perilous league of sand and foam. Ginger, sugar, saffron, and salt all went to the dressing of one dish; cinnamon, cardamon, pepper, and sunflower-seeds might meet and mingle in the bowels of one crenellated pasty.

Eating was only one part of those Yule-tide observances, which lived on until the whey-faced Puritans smote and slew them, and which rose again when good-fellowship reigned once more in England's green and pleasant land. What lovely names had those wines wherewith the Plantagenets washed down their fearsome meats—osey and torren-tyne, malmsey and alicant, vernage and vernagelle! We should find them heady, harsh, and new; but, then, our fathers might have averted their noble noses from our cocktails, and would probably have condemned dry champagne as undrinkable! The silver-gilt goblets from which those muddy old wines were quaffed did not let the turbid dregs be seen, and even the Venetian glass beakers that came later were cryptic and discreet.

Yule was not narrowed to the span of one December day and night in those more ample and generous days. It might be stretched from the Nativity to the Epiphany, from the Shepherds to the Kings. Both in England and in France Twelfth Night had its own especial ceremonies, its sugar-silvered cakes, its mock monarchs, its mysterious beans as full of primitive magic as the beans buried in the painted coffins of the Pharaohs, or the beans for which Jack gave his widowed mother's solitary cow.

In Tudor London, the lawyers made this feast theirs, and Master Shallow would have needed abnormally sharp ears to catch the midnight chimes of St. Clement Danes above the din of the revelling Templars upon the sixth of January. In Stuart London the Puritans looked sourly on while the lads of the sheepskin and the grey quill racketed in Middle Temple Hall, and the citizens decked their walls with evergreens. Their brethren in the country scowled at the plum-porridge, and looked upon mince-pies as a Babylonish abomination. These austere worthies may have felt small surprise when parsons such as Robert Herrick encouraged these profane and, indeed, heathenish proceedings; but some of the less bitterly bigoted of the Dean Prior Round-heads must have been fain to bite back an involuntary and half-wistful smile at hearing themselves exhorted to—

Drink now the strong beer,
Cut the white loaf here,
The while the meat is a-shredding;
For the rare mince-pie,
And the plums stand by
To fill the paste that's a-kneading!

It was in 1644 that Parliament formally abolished the celebration of Christmas. The men who voted for that unnatural abolition were not representative of the English people as a whole. They were drawn mostly from the trading communities of the towns, and they were out of touch with the instincts, the needs, and the desires of the simple country folk, those pestilent country folk, so many of whom had sided with the Amalekite, Charles Stuart! It was the square-toed Londoners that chopped the Cornhill Maypole into faggots, and made a bonfire of all the Christmas garlands upon which they could lay their impious hands. But green wood is ill to burn. Within twenty years the King enjoyed his own again, the garlands put forth fresh shoots, and the mince-pies and plum-porridge sent up their excellent aroma once more.

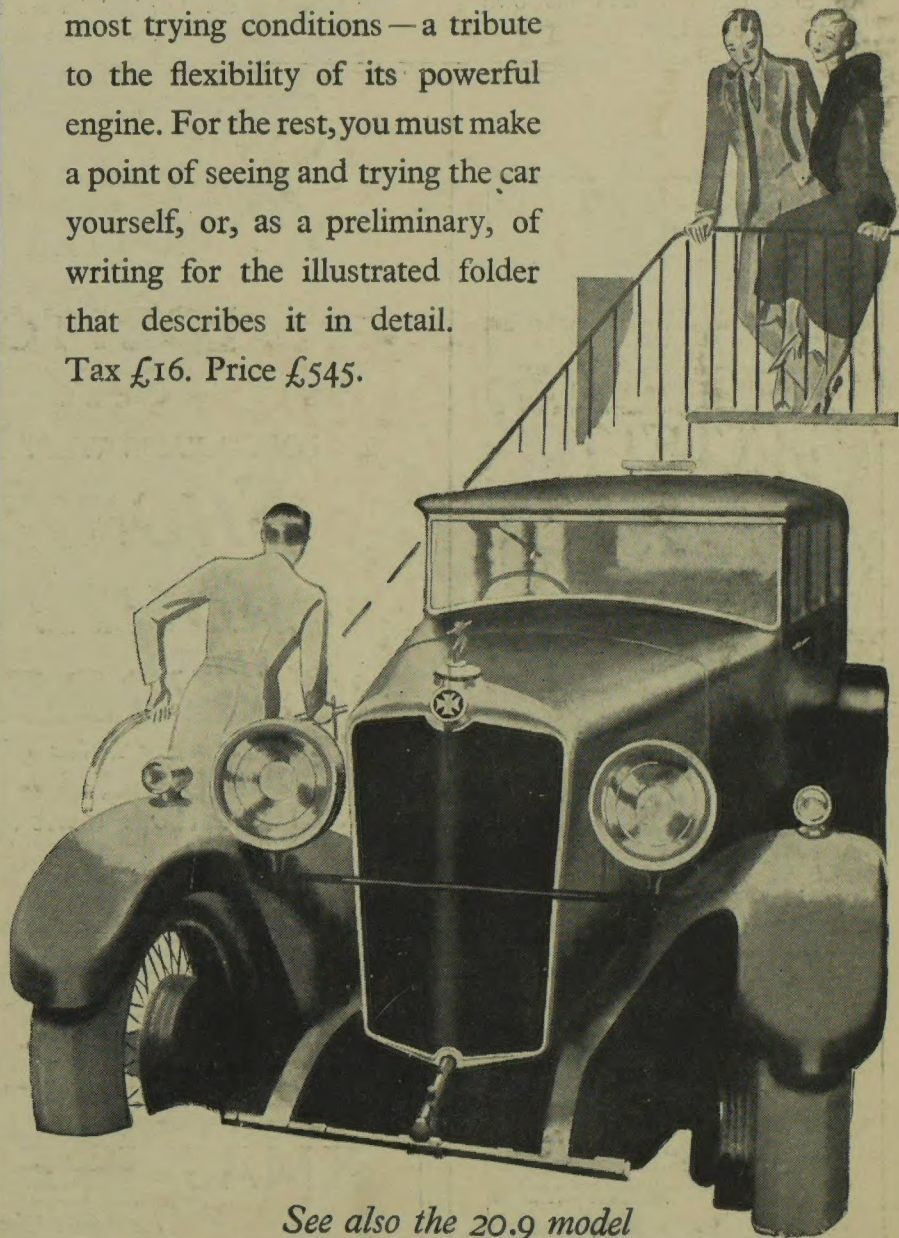
Dickens has been credited with reviving Christmas. Why should he have sought to revive something that had never ceased to live? All that he could do, all that he *did* do, was to enrich its literary appanage as Herrick and Addison had done before him, and nameless writers of carols and mystery plays before *them*. So long as the Englishman had a house, and was content to abide in it and gather his friends there, Christmas could not die, and the old garlands remained green. But now that he has a house no longer, now that he keeps *modranecht* in a cosmopolitan restaurant, to African rhythms played upon American saxophones, now that St. Nicholas has been replaced by a cabaret-chorus and plum-porridge by *pêche Melba*—alas! now are the desires of the Puritans most paradoxically fulfilled, and now are the brave green garlands shrivelled into dust.

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See also the 20.9 model

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THE TEMPLE OF GHOSTS.

By REGINALD CAMPBELL (Author of "Poo Lorn of the Elephants," etc.).
Illustrated by JOHN CAMPBELL.

RAYMOND MANNERING, rafting assistant of the Siam Wood Company, lived in a solitary bungalow built on the right bank of the river Me Toom at a point situated some two hundred and fifty miles due north of Bangkok. There were no Europeans in the locality, but this state of affairs left him completely unmoved, for he liked loneliness and, moreover, loved his work. His duties were legion. He had to collect the thousands of teak logs that swirled down the river in the rains, tie them up into neat rafts averaging one hundred and sixty logs apiece, then despatch them on their long journey down to Bangkok; he had to superintend the work of the company elephants that straightened out drift logs above the rafting station; and finally, as uncrowned king of the district, he was forced to perform certain tasks of which no one in distant Bangkok ever dreamed.

The men under his rule were varied. The raftsmen were lean, swarthy Siamese; the mahouts of the elephants were kindly Laos; the compound coolies were simple Kamoos, and all of the latter feared him greatly, because, as the nearest posse of gendarmerie was fifty miles away, Mannering was apt to take the law into his own hands on occasions.

Mannering's features were thin and determined, so that he looked older than his thirty years. The eyes were a cold, steely blue, reflecting pure, icy intelligence, and when the natives caught their gaze they said that Mannering was one to be respected. And respected he was, though of late the Siamese raftsmen, knowing that he was one lonely white man in their midst, had become more aggressive in their mien towards him. Every week that passed showed their increasing hostility, and finally, one gloomy morning in June, Mannering felt that matters were coming to a head.

The rains had broken heavily, and he knew that at any moment the river Me Toom might sweep down some sixteen thousand teak logs from the forest streams of the north. On the arrival of these logs at a point opposite his bungalow, they would then be made up into rafts and sent on to Bangkok; yet the only men who were capable of navigating the rafts downstream were a crowd of rebellious Siamese who might go on strike at the critical moment. He debated the problem all that day, and then, two hours after dark, he snatched up his electric torch and hastened out into the rain. Arrived at the river bank, he saw that the water was swirling past at a full twenty feet above normal level, and presently the long, dark shapes of hundreds of teak



"Arrived at the river bank he saw that the water was swirling past at a full twenty feet above normal level..."

Continued overleaf.

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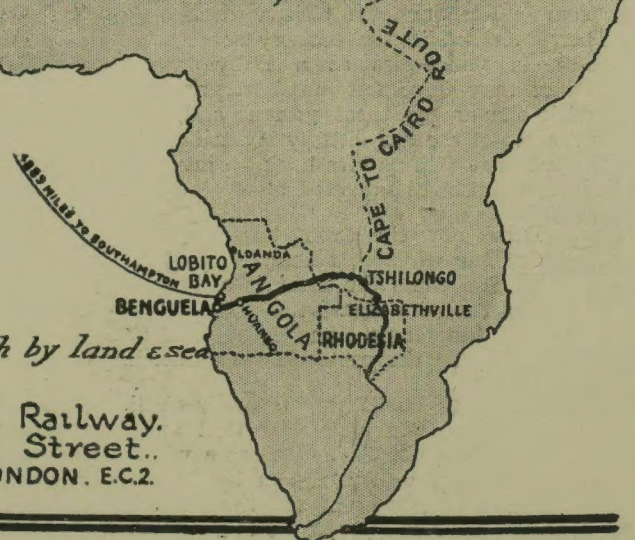
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logs came into view. The inhabitants of Ban Huat, the little village below Mannering's compound, must be warned, and he sounded the company gong. Soon raftsmen and their coolies came running from their homes. Shouting and yelling, they plunged into the river and swam out to tow in the logs to the shore, and Mannering, satisfied that the men were thoroughly aroused, returned to his bungalow. "They're working well enough," he muttered, as he pulled off his sodden clothes. "A bit too well, though, it seems to me!"

He spent the following week supervising the making-up of the timber into rafts, and it was not until the work was well-nigh completed that trouble appeared in the shape of a deputation of raftsmen, headed by one Nai Soan. Nai Soan was Mannering's best raftsmen. He was efficient and courageous; nevertheless he had a lot of unpleasant habits, for he drank, smoked opium, and gambled habitually. It was even rumoured that he had once poisoned a Lao wife of his who had displeased him, but, since Mannering preferred knaves to fools, the Siamese had been kept in the company's service.

"Lord," said Nai Soan, "we have toiled hard, but we are not satisfied with our pay. Though the rafts are now ready, we take them not down to Bangkok unless we receive eight hundred ticals each for this service." Raymond laughed mirthlessly, for the men were already

handsomely paid by his company, and were demanding at least twice as much as they deserved.

"Nai Soan," said he coldly, "these are my orders. To-day is Monday, and the rafts shall go down this week at the same rate of pay as before."

"Then, Master, we go not with them."

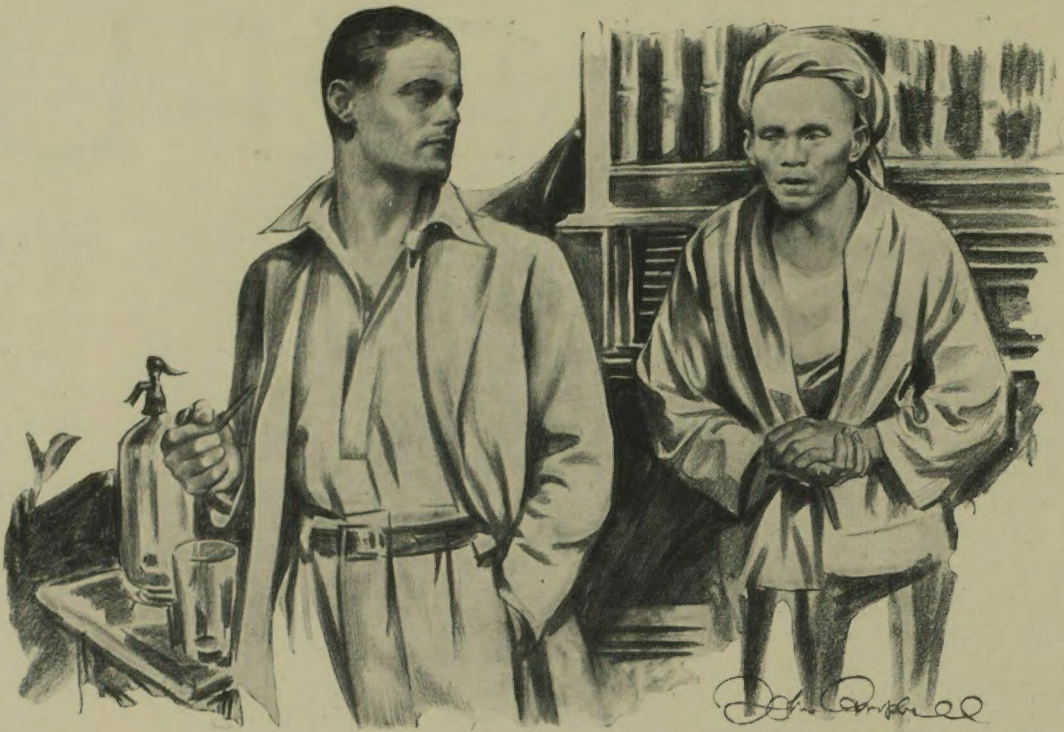
"You shall, all of you, and remember, I am accustomed to see that my commands are obeyed." The words cracked like the lash of a whip, and the palaver was over.

Three days passed, during which time the rafts lay absolutely deserted on either side of the stream, while in the village of Ban Huat an ominous calm prevailed. On the Wednesday morning, Mannering, chafing at the inaction, went for a stroll through the jungle that bordered the river. After half-an-hour's tramping, he came to an old ruined Buddhist temple that showed up on one side of the track. A light shower of rain was just starting, and, climbing over the crumbling masonry, he

entered the ruins and stood in comparative shelter.

The problem of the rafts obsessed him, and presently he spoke aloud: "Those rafts," he said to himself, "must go down by Saturday, or they'll lose the high water. Then Bangkok office will raise hell. Now, how the dickens am I going to manage it?"

[Continued overleaf.]



"Ai Meeung," said he quietly, "draw all the shutters." The boy obeyed, then glanced at his master. "Shall I get the guns ready, Master, for the men will come without doubt to-night?"



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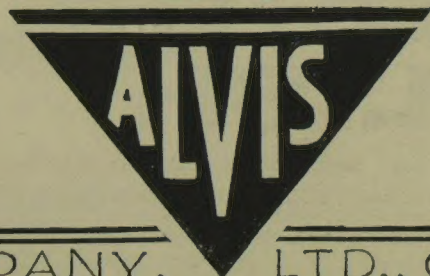
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Continued.

His voice went echoing queerly through the gloom, and, raising his head, for the first time he took stock of his surroundings. The bronze image of Buddha was missing from its place, and only the imprint of the pedestal remained. Behind that, at the rear of the building, a gaping hole in the wall showed him the dense black of the jungle that encircled the ruins. Beneath him were hard stone slabs, moss-encrusted. The air was cold and damp; it seemed to breathe of some unknown horror, and Mannering, as he sensed the eeriness, was certain that by accident he had stumbled upon the famous Temple of Ghosts.

Now, the Temple of Ghosts was ages old, and a strange legend was attached to it. Many years ago, it was said, an ancient Siamese of extreme piety, being caught late one evening by a severe storm in the jungle, was forced to take refuge in the temple. As he sheltered there, a party of three dacoits had arrived. They had robbed the old man of his few possessions, and finally, when he called down vengeance upon them, they had strangled him with their bare hands.

A few months later (so ran the legend) these same robbers had occasion to rest the night in the temple, which had been deserted since the death of the Siamese. The moon was full that night, and in the morning one of the band was found dead by strangulation. The other two had fled to the nearest village, where they gibbered of strange, icy hands that caught them by the throat. They gibbered, be it noted, because they could not speak, since both were raving mad.

Such was the story, and at the present time the natives firmly believed that any evil man who stayed the night in the temple would either die or go mad. Mannering himself knew of the tale, and, though he was no believer in ghosts, his face was thoughtful when he eventually walked back to his bungalow.

On arrival there his clerk, Nai Poon, approached him. "Lord," said the clerk, "the raftsmen are in evil mood, and they require the Master's answer."

"That I, have already given them," barked the other, and strode indoors.

On the following day Mannering awoke to find that the constant soaking in the pouring rain had brought on a sharp attack of malaria. Conscious that he must recover his strength as quickly as possible, he dosed himself with medicine and remained in bed all day. In the evening, his Lao boy, Ai Meeung, crept into the room to light the lamps.

"Lord," said that individual placidly, "things have come to pass that make a man sick. Your cook has bolted, and the compound coolies hide within their huts. Also the clerk, Nai Poon, keeps inside

his house. It seems that one and all are very much afraid of the raftsmen."

"And is not Ai Meeung afraid?" enquired Mannering.

"Lord, I fear no one save you." Mannering smiled grimly, for here was a servant who could be trusted.

"Master," continued the boy, "my wife has heard certain tidings in the village. The raftsmen are now very fierce, and to-night, at nine o'clock, they will gather in the village assembly-house. Lord, it is whispered that Nai Soan will urge them to surround your bungalow, for they know that you are sick."

Mannering shifted on his pillows. The heat in the room was suffocating, and, anxious to breathe some fresh air, he wrapped some blankets round him and walked uncertainly out on to the front verandah. The boy was remaking his bed, when suddenly a crash broke the silence of the night, and a bullet "zipped" past Mannering's head and buried itself in the woodwork of the wall. The white man turned and, without trace of hurry, regained the bed-room.

"Ai Meeung," said he quietly, "draw all the shutters."

The boy obeyed, then glanced at his master. "Shall I get the guns ready, Master, for the men will come without doubt to-night?"

"They will not come," answered Mannering, "for I will go to them. Tell me, is thy wife safe?"

"She is safe, Master."

"Then listen. To-night I go to the raftsmen's meeting-place. But it is half a mile distant, and, since the fever is on me, at times the ground swims under my feet. Therefore shall Ai Meeung come with me, helping me lest I fall on the way."

"He will come," echoed the boy. "The Master will take his revolver?"

"I go with no arms."

"Lord," said the boy, "now I understand why I fear you. It is because you have no fear yourself."

That night the village assembly-house was crowded with raftsmen. The men squatted in a circle, and in their midst Nai Soan mouthed and gesticulated, egging on his audience to take the extreme step of sacking the bungalow and slaying the Lord Mannering. Soon after nine, however, his speech ended abruptly, for, having stepped up unseen from the darkness without, a white man was advancing up a narrow gangway between the squatting forms. His face was pale and drawn, and he leant on the black shoulder of a Lao boy.

Having reached the centre of the assembly, he looked slowly round the audience. He said nothing, but his eyes were cold and

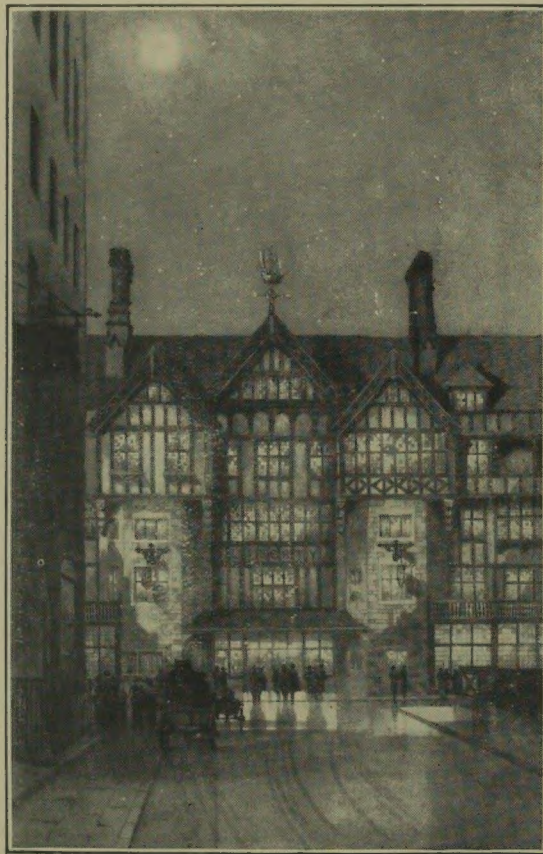
[Continued overleaf.]

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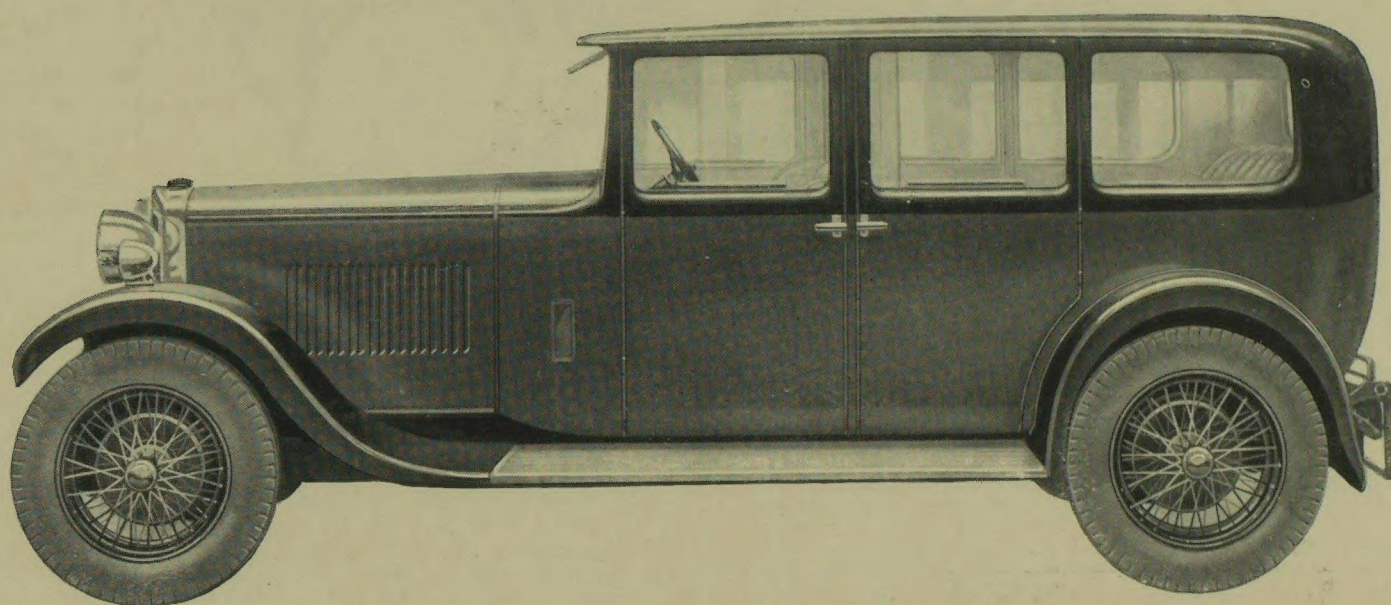


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(Continued.)

glittering. They fixed the raftsmen with a stare as merciless as a snake's, and uneasy shivers began to run through the startled groups. At last Mannering's words rang through the silence: "Nai Soosan is a dog and a coward." Nai Soosan handled his knife ominously, but Mannering ignored him completely.

"Nai Soosan is a dog," he told them, "because he barks much, yet does nothing. And you are monkeys, because you listen to this foolish barking. As for Nai Soosan being a coward, that will I prove to you." The speaker paused, and his next words were pregnant with meaning. "Men of Ban Huat," he said, "to-morrow night the moon is full."

"It is," they assented, wondering what was to-ward.

"To-morrow night shall Nai Soosan stay for many hours in the Temple of Ghosts." The Temple of Ghosts! Here was drama indeed, and as the people of Ban Huat, in common with most Siamese, loved drama above all things, they waited spell-bound for further enlightenment, and the question of rafting was forgotten.

Mannering for the first time turned to Nai Soosan. "Thou hast heard? Is Nai Soosan afraid?" The Siamese shifted

uneasily on his feet, for he sensed that in some inexplicable manner the newcomer had gained influence over the remainder of the raftsmen.

"The Master has called me a coward"—Soosan's tones were surly—"but the Temple of Ghosts is to do with devils, which is bad business. Would you dare to go, Master?"

"Yes, for I do not fear children's talk of ghosts."

"Then, if you will go, so will I, Master."

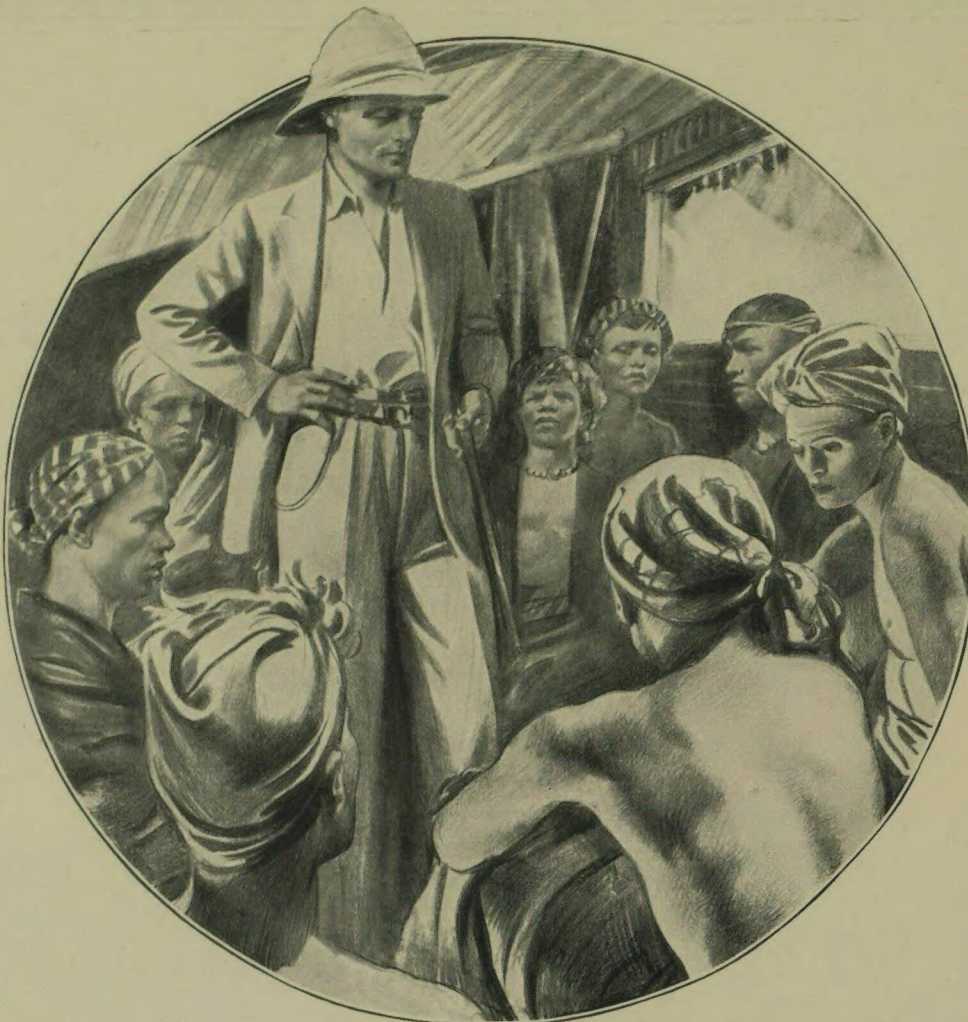
Mannering heaved an inward sigh of relief, for this was what he wanted. "Then all is arranged," he told his audience. "To-morrow night I and Nai Soosan will stay in the Temple of Ghosts. Now, it is thought by me that strange things will happen in the proving of the cowardice of Nai Soosan. Therefore shall there be witnesses, and it is my desire that forty of the bravest men of Ban Huat shall wait outside the temple, so that they may see for themselves what occurs."

For a while the men were torn between fear and curiosity, and finally the latter won.

"Lord," they chorused, "your bidding will we do."

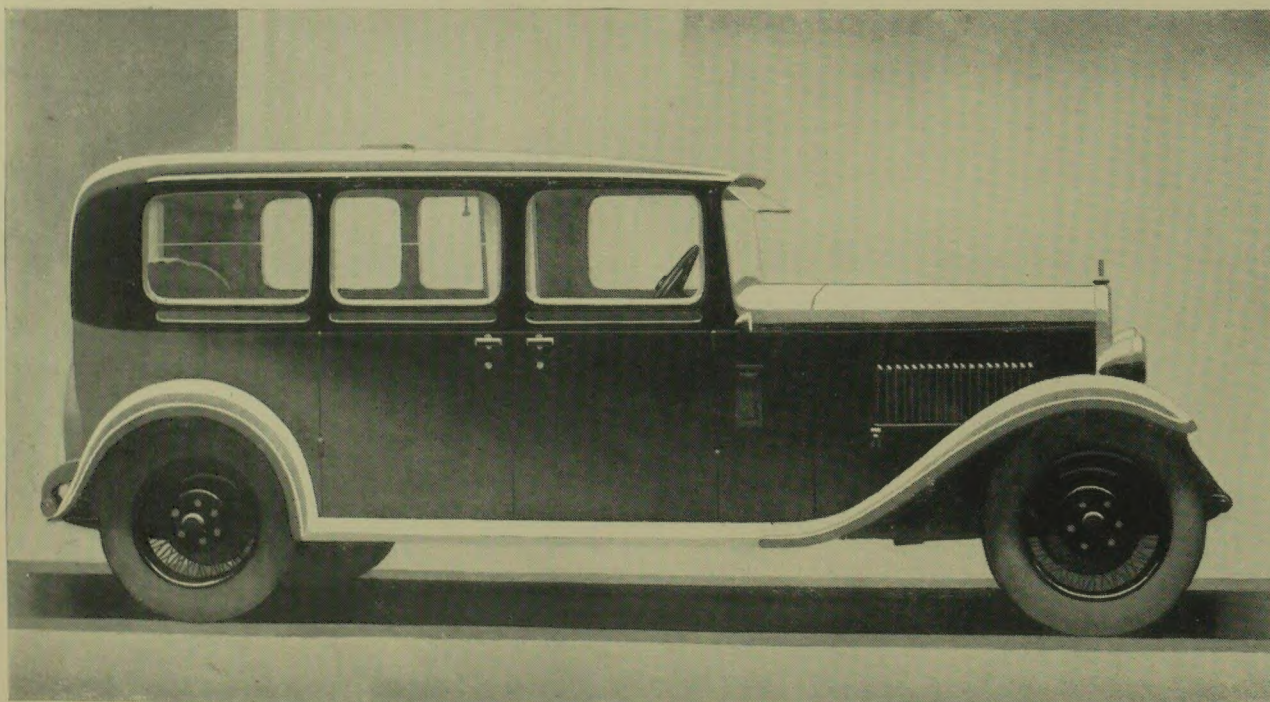
The following night—a Friday night—a strange procession moved through

(Continued on page vi.)



"Having reached the centre of the assembly, he looked slowly round the audience . . . Mannering's words rang through the silence; 'Nai Soosan is a dog and a coward.'"

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AUSTIN

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS.

COVER-PICTURE in Colours: "The Madonna and Child," by CARLO CRIVELLI.

Reproduced by courtesy of the Owner, Jules S. Bache, Esq., of New York, and by arrangement with "Apollo" Magazine.

PRESENTATION PLATE: "FOR WHAT WE HAVE RECEIVED." From the Picture by CECIL ALDIN, the well-known painter of dogs.

A sequel to "For What We Are About to Receive," by the same artist, published with *The Illustrated London News* Christmas Number, 1929. The three little dogs are eloquent of satisfied repletion, but yet keep a watchful eye open. Can there be more coming?—or a country walk, perhaps?

BRINGING IN THE TURKEY. A Full-Page in Colours, from the Picture by GORDON JACKSON.

A heartwarming couple—the chef and harlequin—symbolising Christmas good cheer and merriment.

CHRISTMAS FEASTING: MEATS AND MANNERS OF BYGONE DAYS. A Double-Page in Colours, from Paintings by A. FORESTIER.

A Christmas banquet at the end of the fourteenth century. Ladies of high rank who did not disdain to pick delicate morsels with their fingers, or share a porringer with their neighbour at the table. Christmas festivities in a baronial hall in the fifteenth century and in the days of Henry VIII.

"NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM"; and "NOAH'S ARK." Two Full-Pages in Colours, reproduced from the Paintings in tempera by ERNEST DINKEL A.R.C.A.; exhibited at the Royal Academy, 1930.

In the time before Christmas was; a painter's visions from "Daniel" and "Genesis."

A CHRISTMAS TOAST AT SEA. Reproduced in Colours from the Painting of Dutch Seventeenth-Century Yachts and War-ships, by A. STORCK (1630-1710).

With a rhyming diversion by C. E. Byles upon this old Dutch picture, wherein the Master of one yacht, standing in the high poop, is seen to raise his glass, while his friend in the other drinks to his good health.

"CHARLIE IS MY DARLING." A Short Story by WINIFRED DUKE. Illustrated by GORDON NICOLL.

A boorish country squire, an elopement to Gretna Green, a charming and courteous Jacobite, a moonlight duel, brought lovely Letitia Summerhayes to a curious pass in that breathless winter of 1745 when Bonny Prince Charlie reached Derby in his march South.

A PAINTER'S VISION OF THE "ARABIAN NIGHTS." Four Pages in Colours by JOSÉ SEGRELLES, reproduced from "The Thousand-and-One Nights," published by Salvat Editores, S.A., Barcelona.

Utterly weird and worthy of their fantastic theme are Señor José Segrelles's visions of the story of "Aladdin," of "Morgiana," of "Sinbad the Sailor," "Ali Baba," and the "Princess Parizada."

THE UNSEEN WITNESS. A Short Story by VALENTINE WILLIAMS, Author of "Clubfoot," "Mannequin," etc.; with Illustrations by W. R. S. STOTT.

A modern Christmas mystery-story in which the place of the traditional stage-coach is taken by an air-liner.

TIARE TAHITI: A POLYNESIAN LEGEND. Retold by ALEC WAUGH; illustrated in Colour by LÉON CARRÉ.

A haunting fairy-tale of the South Seas which tells why Polynesian girls who are in love wear a white tiare flower behind their left ear.

UNDER THE MISTLETOE OF FANTASY. A Page in Colour, reproduced from the Picture "The Kiss," by PAUL MAK.

There is a weird note of Chinese fantasy in this striking conception by a well-known Russian artist who was Court painter to the Shah of Persia.

A VIEW OF LONDON AND THE THAMES IN THE GREAT FROST OF 1683. A Double-Page in Colours, reproduced from the Panorama by JAN GRIFFIER THE ELDER.

This is a pictorial record of the great frost of 1683; of which Evelyn and others have recorded that it froze the Thames so hard that a fair was held on it; coaches plied on the river, and oxen were roasted, and printing presses set up on the ice.

JAPANESE "NO" PLAYS AND THEIR SYMBOLISM. By ZOE KINCAID. With Fourteen Illustrations in Colour, reproduced from Japanese Prints.

The austere simplicity of the symbolism in the ancient Japanese "No" plays (which contrasts with the gorgeousness of the costumes worn by the actors) seems remarkably modern to us who are familiar with the revolt against the ultra-realism of the Victorian stage.

THE COTILLON. A Short Story by L. P. HARTLEY; illustrated by STEVEN SPURRIER, R.O.I.

An eerie tale of a beautiful cynic and her lost lover; and of their last meeting at a Christmastide ball.

ROWLANDSON AND HIS ENGLAND. By DOROTHY MARGARET STUART. Illustrated with Seven Reproductions in Colour of famous water-colours by THOMAS ROWLANDSON.

The raffish, vulgar, full-blooded Regency period seen through the eyes of a great artist who lived in it and drained the cup of life to the dregs.

THE SIN OF THE GREAT CHARLES. A Short Story by H. F. M. PRESCOTT, Author of "The Unhurryng Chase," "The Lost Fight," etc. Illustrated in Colour by EDWARD OSMOND.

A lively legend of the splendid but naïve Court of Charlemagne.

LAST YEAR'S SNOW. A Short Story by ELISABETH KYLE.

A British ex-officer returned to the changed London of 1930 only recognises the Spanish dancer who charmed him in the garish 1916 days by one little gesture.

"LADIES FIRST" and "A NEIGHBOURLY KISS." Two charming Child Studies reproduced in Colour from Pictures by S. B. PEARSE.

THE TEMPLE OF GHOSTS. A Short Story by REGINALD CAMPBELL, Author of "Poo Lorn of the Elephants," "The King's Enemies," etc.

A strange tale of a strike of raftsmen in the timber country of Siam, and how it was defeated by courage, cunning, and the unknown.

NOTE.—All the characters in the stories in this number are imaginary.

The Sign of the PERFECT BLEND



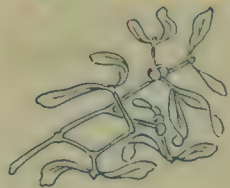
*World-
renowned
for Age
and
Quality*

SPECIALLY PACKED
FOR XMAS
IN 2, 3, 6 AND
12 BOTTLE CASES



THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

CHRISTMAS NUMBER 1930



"BRINGING IN
THE TURKEY."

A merry Christmas to you all!—good cheer,
Music and mistletoe, colour and song,
And whatsoever else hath charm to speed
The golden hours of Yuletide revelry.

Christmas Feasting: Meats and Manners of Bygone Days.

FROM THE PAINTINGS BY A. FORESTIER



IN THE "FINGERS BEFORE FORKS" PERIOD, BANQUET, BANQUETERS, AND SERVANTS OF THE 14TH CENTURY.

Our artist has depicted here a Christmas banquet at the end of the 14th century. The tables were narrow and movable, consisting of boards resting on trestles. The host occupied the seat of honour, while the rest of the company sat on benches. At each place were set a spoon and a roll of bread. Forks did not come into general use till the 16th century. People ate with the fingers, or with a private knife, carried in a sheath at the belt. Soup was served in

porringers, one between two guests—a gentleman and lady—who dipped a spoon alternately. Wooden platters, round or (more often) square, did duty for plates. On each platter was a pile of stale bread, not for eating, but for absorbing gravy. Drinking-vessels were mostly of glass, but silver-gilt goblets were used by persons of consequence. Pages waiting at table took the guests' cups to the butler to be replenished as required.

Christmas Feasting: Meats and Manners of Bygone Days.

FROM THE PAINTINGS BY A FORESTIER.



IN THE REIGN OF HENRY VI., THE ARRIVAL OF THE PEACOCK.

IN THE REIGN OF HENRY VIII., THE PRESENTATION OF A PASTY BEFORE TRENCHING.

In the upper picture, illustrating 15th-century Christmas festivities at a baronial hall, in the days of Henry VI., we see the customary procession bringing in the peacock. On the left are a jester and a varlet chasing off a dog, to make way for the steward. Behind the steward walk the panterer, two trumpeters, the carver, holding aloft the peacock-pie, and the master-cook. The fireplace, piled with Yule logs, is in the middle of the hall, as in Saxon

times. The lower picture represents a Christmas banquet in the 16th century, in Henry VIII.'s time. The "servers," carrying large napkins slung over the shoulder, are marshalled by the deputy steward. The carving squire kneels to do homage to the host, opposite whom, on the table, is a silver ship model. On the table in the right foreground is the "salt"—an elegant vessel of gold. Salt-cellars for lesser folk were of enamelled earthenware.

Before Christmas Was: A Painter's Vision from Daniel.



"NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM."

"And behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven. He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches."—DANIEL IV, 13-14.

FROM THE TEMPERA PAINTING BY ERNEST M. DINKEL, A.R.C.A., EXHIBITED AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY 1930.
(COPYRIGHT.)

Before Christmas Was: A Painter's Vision from "Genesis."



"THE ARK."

"And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of everything that creepeth upon the earth, there went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah. And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth."—GENESIS VII, 7—10.

FROM THE PAINTING BY ERNEST M. DINKEL, EXHIBITED AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY, 1930. (COPYRIGHT.)



A CHRISTMAS TOAST AT SEA.

Being a rhyming diversion upon this old Dutch picture, wherein the Master of the left-hand yacht, standing in the high poop, is seen to raise his glass, while his friend in the right-hand yacht drinks to his good health.

WHENCE be these much-gilded craft,
Tall of poop, with standards aft ?
See ! their skippers raise a glass :
Pledge each other as they pass.

Their emblazon'd banners fly
Naught of England's heraldry :
Dutch the canvas, billowing free ;
Dutch the standards ; Dutch the sea !

So, methinks, some Christmas morn,
Salted admirals, Lowland-born,
Drank, perchance, to Holland's might ;
England's downfall ; Spain's despite.

"Tromp !"—De Ruyter might have cried :
"Here's good luck this Christmas-tide !
May your brooms long sweep the main
From the Orkneys round to Spain !"

"Christmas bring you all you lack !"
Tromp might then have shouted back :
"And, when Holland's foes you meet,
May you burn the English fleet !"

Stout old Squareheads ! Those were days
When you set the Thames ablaze ;
Gave the Admiralty creeps ;
Put the wind up Samuel Pepys !

Once, when Peace renew'd her smile,
Sporting Mynheers, friends awhile,
Sent Charles Two his earliest "yot,"
Mary—mother of the lot.

Soon our first gay yachtsman-King
Built (says Pepys) "a pretty thing"
Much beyond the Dutchman's art :
So did English yachting start.

C. E. BYLES.

FROM THE PAINTING OF DUTCH 17TH CENTURY YACHTS AND WAR-SHIPS, BY A. STORCK (1630-1710), REPRODUCED BY COURTESY OF MESSRS. LEGGATT BROTHERS, ST. JAMES'S STREET, S.W.1



CHARLIE IS MY DARLING

By WINIFRED DUKE
(Author of *The Laird*, *Tales of Hate*, & *The Drove Road*)
ILLUSTRATED BY GORDON NICOLL.



LEGEND says that Love goes winged, but the clumsy coach with its burden of lovers and luggage went heavily through the winter lanes. Blackness pressed against the frost-patterned windows of the cumbrous vehicle, broken only by a meagre glimmer across fields from some solitary farm. The coachman cracked his whip, or swore at the sweating, straining horses as they slipped and slithered. His muffled objurgations came faintly to the ears of his passengers, neither of whom heeded. Each had his and her perplexities and problems to wrestle with. The man wondered irritably whether this nightmare journey would ever come to an end. The girl dreaded that it should, and refused stubbornly to contemplate what lay beyond.

Letitia Summerhayes was beginning to realise dimly that she had been an arrant little fool. The adventure, regarded originally as a romantic escapade, was rapidly becoming a terrifying reality. It had seemed like something happening to a young miss in a forbidden novel to exchange her dreary, nun-like existence at Thornby Hall, where she scarcely saw anyone save her stern guardian and her dragon of an old nurse, for the exciting and unknown joys of an elopement to Gretna Green. She glanced under her eyelids at the companion chosen for the occasion. Tom Fellowes, red-faced, heavy-jowled, none too sober, was fast losing the fairy-prince attributes with which Letitia had so eagerly endowed him. She had watched him strike the postillion, heard him swear at the coachman, and grumble at her own helplessness and unnecessary baggage. Letitia thought drearily of the Tom who had sung love ballads beneath her window; the Tom who left the gentlemen at their wine and joined her, a shrinking solitary, in the gaunt withdrawing-room; the Tom who had kissed her under a harvest moon. There were two Toms, it seemed, and this new Tom was an intimidating and unwelcome stranger. The coach lurched over the edge of a deep, water-logged rut, precipitating Letitia into the arms of her bridegroom. He growled and shook her off, bruising her white skin against a displaced piece of luggage. She cried softly, whereupon he ordered her harshly to stop her d—d whining. She'd have worse than that to put up with before they gained the Border.

Letitia's sobs increased. "I would I had never come with you!" she lamented shrilly.

"And a fine fool I was, to burden myself with a whimpering bundle of silks and whimsies," retorted her companion. "I vow 'tis not my fault that this vile weather delays us."

"How many miles have we made?" Letitia sniffed.

"Plague take the girl! Can I tell in this cursed dark? Miles! Inches, more like."

Letitia giggled dolefully. He shot out an arm, squeezed her plump body, and swore irritably when, suddenly alarmed and maiden-shy, she drew away from his embrace.

"Tis over-late in the day to be too nice, my dear," he told her. She edged further back into her corner in a mingled terror and disgust.

The wretched lights of a hamlet showed some distance ahead, but though the prospect of shelter and possible female companionship afforded by a halt at the inn loomed near, Letitia's spirits sank yet lower. If one fear lounged beside her in the coach, another pressed on its heels. Her outraged guardian might ere this have discovered her flight, and started in irate pursuit. Already it seemed to her as if they had been days on the road instead of some twelve hours. She had made her chamber door secure, and escaped in truly romantic fashion by means of a rope-ladder from her window; but the snowy lanes, a cast shoe, a drunken postillion, had all hindered and delayed the journey until darkness,

closing in early this November night, made more rapid progress impossible. She ventured timidly: "Where are we?"

Tom shrugged his shoulders sulkily. "Some hole of a village, belike. I shall tell this blockhead to halt at the inn. I vow I am as empty as Marsh Beck in midsummer, and you, child, could do with a dish of tea."

He thrust his head out of the coach window and bawled directions. A fresh and more alarming lurch answered him. This time it proved impossible to right the half-capsized cumbersome thing. One horse had lost a shoe, a wheel lay in the ditch, and the postillion had conveniently disappeared. Tom swore lustily. "We shall have to walk," he told Letitia.

She stifled a shriek of protest. "Walk, Sir? To Gretna Green? I vow 'tis impossible."

"Did I say to Gretna Green? There's no greater fool than a young female! Where's that rogue of a postillion? I'll lay my cane about his ears when I see him!" The coachman muttered sulkily that the postillion was "feared," and a mile or so back had refused to come further.

"Afraid? Plague take the goose-livered poltroon! Afraid of what, pray? Highwaymen?"

The coachman rejoined lugubriously: "No, your honour. Of these murdering 'ighlanders."

"Highlanders!" wailed Letitia. "Oh, Sir, I entreat you, take me home. I had indeed rather return to my guardian than be murdered or worse by such savages. Why, my woman says they do not even wear stockings."

"Your woman's a fool, and hang me if her mistress be not a bigger! Children's tales!" Tom blustered wrathfully. Letitia Summerhayes was an heiress, and her money-bags would be mighty useful to supply his empty coffers and dwindling rent-roll. He had no fancy for returning her to her infuriated relative, and finding himself the laughing-stock of neighbouring squires and adjacent villages. "Come, pluck up heart, my love. We can lie at the inn, and proceed early to-morrow."

Letitia descended gingerly into the snow, clutched her companion's arm, and, to an accompaniment of "La's!" faint shrieks, and half-hysterical protests that she vowed she could not continue for another yard, succeeded in traversing a quarter of a mile of execrable lane. The village, a cluster of low-roofed cottages, fronting a duck-pond and a green, seemed curiously silent and deserted. Tom, peering irritably about him, saw a glimmer that proclaimed a signboard, and hammered loudly on the door beneath. Letitia, cowering behind him, anticipating she knew not what, was vastly relieved when a woman, young, and not ill-looking, came to answer the impatient summons.

"Is the whole place dead? Why the devil could you not show a gleam of light?" Tom stormed. "We design to lie here, and you must send someone to assist my coachman in bringing our baggage hither."

The woman shook her comely head. She was mighty sorry, but—

Tom broke in on her mumbled excuses. "The lady is near swooning with fatigue. Do you expect her to spend the night on the roadside? Have you illness here?"

"Smallpox!" yelled Letitia. "Oh, Sir, come away, I entreat! I—I prefer to return to the coach for the rest of the night."

The woman answered sulkily that they of Widder village might think themselves fortunate if they escaped with nothing worse than the smallpox. Where had the lady and gentleman come from that they did not know that the Young Pretender, with a horde of bearded savages calling themselves Highlanders, was marching south? Widder expected a visitation from some of these any hour. The invaders had reached

Kendal a day or two back, and the country talk was all of their depredations. Why, 'twas said that they killed and ate children.

Tom Fellowes roared with laughter. Bonnie Prince Charlie's rebellion had not so far alarmed or disturbed the district near his home, and it was confidently anticipated that the Duke of Cumberland's force, advancing north, would meet and quell the wild expedition from Scotland. He thrust a high-booted leg determinedly over the doorstep.

"Come, my good dame, we are neither Highlanders nor Jacobites, but a pair of stranded travellers in a pretty plight. Harkee, Ma'am, a word in your ear. The sooner we are across the Border the better, but we needs must halt here until my coach is mended. Get ready a chamber for the lady and one for me, and supper for us both."

His air of authority, together with the significant glimpse of a heavy purse, conquered the landlady's tremors and objections. She ushered the couple into a tolerably comfortable parlour, rekindled the sulky, expiring fire, and hurried away to see after some food. Letitia toasted her toes and pondered over the news contained in the woman's chatter. The Young Pretender! La! It was like a page out of a romance, this dash into the heart of England, his ragged army at his heels, a throneless, crownless young man, marching towards London, prepared to battle for his lawful rights.

She glanced in sudden discontent at her lover. Tom was asleep, his mouth open, and regular snores proceeding therefrom. Letitia pouted. 'Twas monstrous impolite to fall asleep like this, as if they were already married. Squire Fenway she had seen lounge and yawn in his wife's withdrawing-room, but one expected no better from a husband of seven years' standing. Her heart sank unaccountably. How could she endure seven years, or possibly much longer, of married life with Tom, when as a lover he showed himself so discourteous and indifferent? Her pride rebelled.

"I shall sup in my chamber," she reflected wrathfully. "Oh, what a fool I was to attempt this!"

She rose and tiptoed to the door. Her shriek rent the air as she peered out into the half-dark and saw a bearded face. Its owner displayed magnificent teeth and gabbled something unintelligible. Letitia shrieked again, the sound bringing the landlady from some obscure region, and a young man out of a room across the passage. Tom, whose sword should have been instantly at her service, still slumbered noisily.

"La! has it gone?" shrilled Letitia. The young man laughed, his eyes alight with admiration for her dishevelled beauty. "A thousand pardons, Madam. Did my poor Angus alarm you?" he asked anxiously.

Letitia gave an apprehensive affirmative, but was not too frightened to fail to perceive that the newcomer was tall and fair, with a high-bred, haughty look that contrasted favourably with Tom's boorish behaviour on many occasions, or the manners of such bucolic squires as visited Thornby Hall. She wondered who he might be, and what brought him there. His next words partially explained.

"May I offer my apologies and regrets, Madam? I am with the army of Prince Charles Edward, and a lame horse obliges me to halt here until I can replace him. My servant is Highland, but a harmless and faithful fellow. He will do you no hurt."

"La! Sir, and I am mighty thankful to learn it. 'Tis said in the north that the Highlanders are vastly dangerous, and no lady is safe from them." She curtsied and withdrew into the parlour.

Tom was now awake and alert. She related her small adventure, and saw his eyes bulge. Letitia pouted again. What possible concern had he with this Jacobite officer and his attendant? He did not seem annoyed or resentful when she announced her intention of retiring and supping upstairs. If this were what an elopement could be like, how vastly disappointing marriage must be!

Her cloak-bag had been fetched from the coach, but Letitia felt oddly disinclined to play the abigail to herself and take out night-rail and night-cap. She looked discontentedly round the small room, with its sloping ceiling, and four-poster framed in musty curtains. Suddenly she discovered that she had left her handkerchief—a trifle of lace—in the parlour below. There was no hand-bell wherewith to summon somebody to fetch it. Letitia frowned, then decided herself to risk the return journey down the crooked staircase and along the dark passage. An agreeable

thrill ran through her at the possibility of seeing again the fair-haired young man. Outside the parlour door she paused. Voices—Tom's and the landlady's—sounded, coupled with a savoury smell of cooking. Righteous wrath smouldered in Letitia's white bosom under her silk bodice. Tom could enjoy himself over a succulent supper in company with the hussy who kept this hostelry, whilst she, his chosen bride, shivered and starved upstairs. She was about to fling open the door and stage a dramatic entry, fully anticipating finding the besom seated on Tom's knee, when his words suddenly arrested her attention.

"Where were your eyes not to know him? Lud! woman, thirty thousand pounds to your hand for the taking, and you stutter and hesitate. Why be so nice? Many would wish they had your luck."

"They are welcome to it." The landlady's tone was sulky. "The gentleman and his servant came an hour back, he with a lame horse, and bespoke supper and a fresh nag. I could tell that he was quality—"

"Quality!" Tom sneered softly. "Fair hair, an air of command, a long purse. Is this a north of England squire? I will wager that you have the Young Pretender under your roof, and some not a mile from here would be glad to know it."

Letitia shivered in the draughty darkness. Her own tangled and disagreeable plight, her own comfortless future, sank into oblivion before the peril threatening that fair head across the passage. The Prince here

in this remote inn, and a fortune his who took him! Could

Tom be so treacherous? He was, she knew, stolidly

Whig in principle, but greed of gold might

be a more powerful lever than any wish to

check this mad rebellion from spreading

further. She remembered riding into

Carlisle behind her guardian a few

weeks past, and how he halted

before the great gates and with

his whip pointed out the

Government's proclamation

affixed there—that all who

could read might know the

mighty bribe to base

betrayal: *Thirty thousand*

pounds for the person of

the Pretender's eldest son,

dead or alive.

Letitia opened the

door and walked into

the parlour. The land-

lady took the opportu-

nity to sidle out.

Tom, midway through

an excellent supper, had

already drunk sufficient

wine to be indiscreet.

He pulled his lady-love

down beside him and

asked her loudly to hazard

a guess as to whom she had

lodged under the same roof.

"Come, lass—" an ingratiating

grin and squeeze—" 'twill be

something to tell our grand-

children that you saw the Young

Pretender."

Letitia, rosy and offended, drew

away, affecting incredulity. "La! Sir, I

vow you're too rough. And if you bring me

near those Highland monsters, I shall scream."

Tom was too pleased with the plot ripening

in his befuddled brain to heed her coyness.

"Thirty thousand pounds," he muttered avidly.

"A fortune, eh, my bonny bird?"

Letitia's blue eyes widened in assumed

astonishment. "Is somebody to give you

that, Sir? A welcome wedding-gift indeed."

Tom laughed. It was a sinister sound, for all its pretended joviality.

"I design to earn it honestly," he told her. "But I thought you abed.

What brought you downstairs? The hope of another glimpse of the

young man with the yellow hair? I vow I shall be jealous."

Letitia craved for the safety of her mean chamber and a barred door

between her and this tipsy traitor. She tossed her head, remarking tartly

that Mr. Fellowes might know that fair locks had no attraction for her.

She vastly preferred a dark gentleman. Tom, black as the proverbial

crow, gallantly appropriated the compliment, kissed her ardently, despite

her shrinking reluctance, and restored her her dropped handkerchief.

There was a pretty little battle between them over the question of his

escorting her upstairs. Letitia finally released herself and fled, not ven-

turing to breathe freely until she had secured her door and was trembling

on the far side of it. Only after Tom had returned noisily to the parlour

and his interrupted supper, did she venture forth to the top of the stairs

and crouch there, listening.

The time seemed long to her, but eventually she heard Tom's voice

shouting to the landlady that he was going out, and would return ere long.

Letitia gathered up her wide skirts, and hard upon the banging of the inn

door pattered down the stair. She intruded unceremoniously into the

solitude of the yellow-haired young man. It was not a time for the

niceties of etiquette, whether he were prince, peer, or peasant.

"Sir, I implore you to aid me." She was very lovely in her distress

and dishevelment. "The gentleman who has just gone out has—has



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"... the dark cloak covered deficiencies, and a broad-brimmed hat concealed her curls and much of her face. In the dark she might well pass for a boy, and fervently hoped to do so. What her own future was to be she did not know or care. . . . Her companion was waiting for her at the foot of the stairs."

played a cruel trick upon me. We were bound for Gretna Green, and I now find, to my unutterable confusion, that he has no intention of wedding me. I beg your assistance in my strait."

"But, Madam—" the young man was polite and perplexed—"how can I serve you? I am bound upon other business—"

"La! Sir, that can wait." She was beautiful and imperious. "Where is this army which you are to rejoin?"

"A few miles distant, Madam, at Ribblebridge. But I could scarce—"

"You can, Sir, and must. My reputation is at stake. If you only convey me there in your company, I have friends at hand who will receive me. Is my whole life to be ruined by one act of female folly?"

"But you cannot ride, Madam, in that gear." His glance strayed in perplexity over her silks.

"Did I say that I intended to, Sir? Have you, amongst your baggage, a spare suit of gentleman's clothes and a riding-cloak? Then oblige me monstrously by the loan of the same, and Letitia Summerhayes is your life-long debtor." She swept him a magnificent curtsey.

"Letitia Summerhayes? 'Tis a name for a poet to write sonnets to," murmured the young man ardently.

Letitia blushed. Of course, the Prince was a Stuart, and the Stuarts were notorious for the fair women whom they dallied with; but he must not imagine that she was fruit ripe for his own careless picking. She dared not imperil either his safety or her own heart. Haughtily she drew herself up, demanding: "The clothes, Sir, the clothes! 'Twill take me some minutes to dress myself, and time is precious. I entreat you not to delay."

She seized the small valise that he proffered with a low bow and ran off with it upstairs. Blushing still more, she discarded her feminine fripperies and slipped into the more serviceable male attire for a midnight ride. The owner was taller than Letitia, but the dark cloak covered deficiencies, and a broad-brimmed hat concealed her curls and much of her face. In the dark she might well pass for a boy, and fervently hoped to do so. What her own future was to be she did not know

or care. Once the Prince was safely amongst his followers, she must return to Thornby Hall, eat humble pie, and sink dejectedly into spinsterhood. No man would ever marry her after such an escapade as this.

Her companion was waiting for her at the foot of the stairs. His eyes spoke his admiration, but Letitia dropped her own, and, declining his arm as out of keeping with her assumed character, pattered meekly behind his heels into the dark. A fresh horse was at the door, and two strong arms swung Letitia up behind the rider. The Highland servant appeared like a shadow and kept easy pace beside the animal and its double burden. The night was black and starless, with a great wind sighing gustily over the empty fields.

Letitia Summerhayes had the sharp ears of the country-bred. Suddenly she leaned forward and touched her companion's arm. "Voices, Sir. It might be wiser to halt. They seem to be disputing."

"In that case, Madam, I am for pressing on. Their quarrel can have no concern with us. Either they will be too engrossed to heed us, or we can perchance act as mediators." Despite Letitia's entreaties he laughed and spurred the horse faster.

Round a corner of the lane they came upon a sight which froze Letitia's blood. The actors in the brief drama, strangers to her escort, were agonisingly familiar to her. Her guardian, undoubtedly in a royal rage, was gripping by one arm the wretched postillion who had slipped away in the dark a few miles from Widder. His disengaged fist the worthy man was shaking under the nose of Tom Fellowes. Letitia meditated swooning, then decided to whisper to her companion to take no notice and ride past. 'Twas a mere countrymen's brawl.

"I'll break your neck for you and save the hangman the trouble!" Letitia's guardian was storming. "You double-dyed scoundrel! You, a penniless squire, with your wretched acres of less value than a cheese full of maggots, dare to persuade my ward, an heiress, to elope with you!

Oh, you need not bluster and deny! This snivelling fellow here, whom I overtook an hour back soaking in an ale-house, told me of your destination. Where is Miss Summerhayes?"

"At the inn in Widder. I vow I have not touched a hair of her foolish head. As for a penniless squire, Sir, thirty thousand pounds is no mean sum for a bridegroom to buy youth and beauty and like wealth with." Tom chuckled. "It may be mine before the night is out."

"I am over-wise for fairy tales, Sir. Where is this inn?"

"A bare half-mile distant. And 'tis no fairy tale. The Young Pretender is supping there, and I was on my way to the nearest magistrate's house to apprise him of the fact when I had the monstrous misfortune to fall in with you—"

"Oh, Sir, ride on, I implore," Letitia breathed in terror. "Can you not understand your danger?"

"There is none to me, Madam. These gentlemen, I take it, are your future spouse and your guardian?"

"I would never wed a traitor, Sir. You heard what he threatened. Oh, ride on, before 'tis too late!"

For reply her companion laughed gaily and dismounted. He beckoned to his silent Highlander to hold the horse on whose back the trembling Letitia sat in the direst apprehension, and walked forward to the group. "A moment, Sir." He tapped Tom on the shoulder. "I heard you speak of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent as the Pretender. Will

you take back your words, or must my sword make you?"

Tom Fellowes was no coward. With an oath he whipped out his blade, and his aggressor did likewise. The twin steels met and clashed. Letitia, who knew Tom by repute as a noted swordsman, waited in an agony, until it became evident that he was faced with an adversary having a wrist of steel and as many tricks of thrust and parry as his own. She cried out when the darting point ran in near the shoulder, and Tom stumbled sideways against the squealing postillion. The victor wiped and sheathed his blade before remounting with a mocking bow and laugh.

"Go back to the inn, gentlemen," he called gaily. "I fear that you will find both birds flown."

"Your Royal Highness should not have so endangered yourself," gasped Letitia. They had ridden rapidly from the scene, and were making for Ribblebridge along a rutty turnpike.

"I fear you mistake me, Madam, as much as the gentleman whose shoulder I have just damaged." He laughed again. "I am not his Royal Highness, only his and your very humble servant, Captain Ogilvy. The Prince is safe with his army, and I verily believe 'twas his person you feared for more than for your own reputation and future."

Letitia's answer came muffled with tears. "You must think me a fool, Sir. I did indeed believe that you were his Royal Highness, and when I learned of the wicked design that Mr. Fellowes harboured against him, to persuade you to escort me to the army seemed the only plan to secure your own safety." She wept softly. "What am I to do? My guardian will be too angered to receive me, and—and the friends I spoke of to you, they—they do not exist." The long silence was only broken by the beat of the horse's hoofs and the wind's sighing.

"Madam—" the young man's voice shook—"you have seen to-night how base a traitor lust of gold can make a gentleman. Give me the chance to prove to you that all men are not thus. You will think me crazed, but when I saw you in the inn, and the landlady chattered of your halting there on your wedding journey, I found it in my heart to hate your bridegroom. Come with me to the Prince's army. Lady Ogilvy, my chief's wife, will be honoured to shelter you, and—and in time—" He broke off. Lest he should have offended her by his madness he dared not speak further. Letitia Summerhayes answered him with a happy little laugh.

"La! Sir, you run on monstrous fast. My poor wits can scarce keep pace." She leaned forward, her pretty lips close to his ear. "Indeed, I am vastly glad that you are not the Prince, Captain Ogilvy."

THE END.



"She cried out when the darting point ran in near the shoulder, and Tom stumbled sideways against the squealing postillion. The victor wiped and sheathed his blade before remounting with a mocking bow and laugh."

A Painter's Vision of "The Arabian Nights": Segrelles Portrays Parizada.

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"The Princess Parizada thanked the holy man and bade him farewell. Then, remounting her horse, she threw the ball and followed the way it rolled. At last it stopped at the foot of the mountain. The Princess dismounted, stuffed her ears with cotton, and boldly began to climb. The more she advanced, many more and ever louder grew the voices, but she was not troubled. She climbed so high that at length she could see the cage with the bird, which, small as it was, cried in a voice of thunder: 'Fool, go back, and come not near!' The Princess ran to the cage, and, seizing it, said: 'Bird, I hold thee despite thyself, and thou shalt not escape!' 'Brave maiden,' said the bird, 'do me no ill. As I must needs be a slave, I prefer thee for my mistress.' Said the Princess: 'I know that there is here golden water with magic powers. First tell me where it is.' The bird showed her the water, which was

(Continued opposite.)



"SHE THREW THE BALL AND FOLLOWED THE WAY IT ROLLED": PRINCESS PARIZADA, ARRAYED AND ARMED AS A CAVALIER, RIDES FORTH IN QUEST OF HER LOST BROTHERS.

Continued.]

near at hand, and the Princess filled a little silver flagon that she carried. Then she said: 'I seek also the singing tree. Where is it?'; and the bird showed her, and said: 'Take but the least branch and plant it in thy garden; there it will root.' Again the Princess spoke: 'Thou art the cause of my brothers' deaths, and they must be among the black rocks that I saw. Take me to them.' Unwillingly, the bird replied: 'The task is difficult. Look round, and thou wilt perceive a pitcher. Take it and sprinkle each black rock with the water it contains, and thus will thy brothers be restored.' The Princess took the pitcher, and bore in her other hand the singing branch. As she went down the mountain, she poured water from the pitcher upon each black rock, and each changed into a man."

From "The Story of the Two Sisters Jealous of Their Youngest Sister." Abridged from the French of "Les Mille et Une Nuits." (Galland's Edition).



"THE FURTHER SHE ADVANCED, MANY MORE AND EVER LOUDER GREW THE VOICES, BUT SHE WAS NOT TROUBLED": PRINCESS PARIZADA AMONG THE ENCHANTED ROCKS THAT HAD ONCE BEEN MEN.



"THE PRINCESS TOOK THE PITCHER AND BORE IN HER OTHER HAND THE SINGING BRANCH": PRINCESS PARIZADA OBTAINS THE MAGIC GOLDEN WATER TO CHANGE THE ROCKS BACK INTO HUMAN FORM.

Segrelles Interprets "The Arabian Nights": Scenes from "Sinbad" & "Ali Baba."

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SINBAD'S ADVENTURE IN THE ROCKY VALLEY STREWN WITH DIAMONDS: A MOUNTAINOUS LAND HAUNTED BY SERPENTS "CAPABLE OF SWALLOWING AN ELEPHANT."

"When the roc was settled, and I found myself upon the ground, I speedily untied the knot, and had scarcely done so when the bird, having taken up a serpent of a monstrous length in her bill, flew away. The place where she left me was a very deep valley, encompassed on all sides with mountains, so high that they seemed to reach above the clouds, and so full of steep rocks that there was no possibility of getting out of that valley. This was a new perplexity, so that when I compared this place with the desert island from which the roc had brought me, I found that I had gained nothing by the change. As I walked through this valley I perceived it was strewn with diamonds, some of which were of surprising bigness. I took a great deal of pleasure in looking at them; but speedily I saw at a distance such objects as very much diminished my satisfaction, and which I could not look upon without terror; they were a great number of serpents, so big and so long that the least of them was capable of swallowing an elephant. They retired in the day-time to their dens, where they hid themselves from the roc, their enemy, and did not come out but in the night-time. I spent the day in walking about the valley, resting myself at times in such places as I thought most suitable. When night came on I went into a cave, where I thought I might be in safety. I stopped the mouth of it, which was low and strait, with a great stone, to preserve me from the serpents, but not so exactly fitted as to hinder light from coming in. I supped on part of my provisions, but the serpents, which began to appear, hissing about in the meantime, put me into such extreme fear that you may easily imagine I did not sleep. When day appeared the serpents retired, and I came out of the cave trembling. I can justly say that I walked a long time upon diamonds without feeling any inclination to touch any of them. At last I sat down, and notwithstanding my uneasiness, not having shut my eyes during the night, I fell asleep."

From "The Second Voyage of Sinbad the Sailor," in "Fairy Tales from the Arabian Nights." (Dent's "Everyman Library.")

"Ali Baba climbed up a large tree, from whence he could see all that passed without being seen. This tree stood at the bottom of a single rock, which was very high, and so steep and craggy that nobody could climb it. The troop, who were all well mounted and well armed, came to the foot of this rock and there dismounted. Ali Baba counted forty of them, and by their looks never doubted that they were thieves; nor was he mistaken, for they were a troop of bandits, who, without doing any harm in the neighbourhood, robbed at a distance, and made that place their rendezvous. Every man unbridled his horse, and tied him to a shrub, and hung about his neck a bag of corn. Then each of them took his saddle-bags, which seemed to Ali Baba to be full of gold and silver by the weight. One, whom he took to be their captain, came with his saddle-bags on his back under the tree in which Ali Baba was hidden, and, making his way through the shrubs, pronounced these words, 'Open, Sesame,' so distinctly that Ali Baba heard him. As soon as the captain of the robbers uttered these words, a door opened, and, after he had made all his troop go in before him, he followed them, and the door shut again of itself. The robbers stayed some time within the rock, and Ali Baba, who feared that some or all of them together might come out and catch him if he endeavoured to make his escape, was obliged to sit patiently in the tree. He was nevertheless, tempted once or twice to get down and mount one of their horses, and, leading another, to drive his asses before him to the town with all the haste he could; but uncertainty made him choose the safest way. At last the door opened again, and the forty robbers came out. As the captain went in last, so he came out first, and stood to see them all pass by; then Ali Baba heard him make the door fast by pronouncing the words, 'Shut, Sesame.' Every man mounted again, and, when the captain saw them all ready, he put himself at their head, and they returned the way they came."

From "The Story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves" in "Fairy Tales from the Arabian Nights." (Dent's "Everyman Library.")



"THEIR CAPTAIN PRONOUNCED THESE WORDS, 'OPEN, SESAME,' SO DISTINCTLY THAT ALI BABA HEARD HIM": THE ARRIVAL OF THE FORTY THIEVES AT THEIR CAVE.

A Painter's Vision of "The Arabian Nights": Segrelles Portrays Morgiana.

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'SHE WENT AND POURED ENOUGH BOILING OIL INTO EVERY JAR TO STIFLE AND DESTROY THE ROBBER WITHIN':
ALI BABA'S RESOURCEFUL SLAVE-GIRL SAVES HIM FROM THE THIEVES.

"She took the oil-pot and went into the yard, and as she came near the first jar, the robber within said softly, 'Is it time?' . . . Morgiana collected herself without showing the least alarm, and answered, 'Not yet, but presently.' She went in this manner to all the jars, giving the same answer, till she came to the jar of oil. By this means Morgiana found out that her master, Ali Baba, who thought that he had entertained an oil-merchant, had admitted thirty-eight robbers into his house, with this pretended merchant as their captain. She made what haste she could to fill her oil-pot, and returned into her kitchen; where, as soon as she had lighted the lamp, she took a great kettle, and went again to the oil-jar, filled the kettle, and set it on a great wood fire to boil. As soon as it had boiled, she went and poured enough into every jar to stifle and destroy the robber within."

From "The Story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves" in "Fairy Tales from the Arabian Nights." (Dent's "Everyman Library.")

Segrelles Portrays Aladdin: A Painter Interprets "The Arabian Nights."

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"Aladdin jumped into the cave and found the three halls just as the African magician had described them. He went through them with all the precaution the fear of death could inspire; crossed the garden without stopping, mounted the steps to the terrace, and took down the lamp from the niche, threw out the wick and liquor, and put it in his bosom. But as he came down from the terrace he stopped in the garden to observe the fruit. All the trees were loaded with extraordinary fruit, of all colours. The white were pearls; the clear and transparent, diamonds; the deep red, rubies; the green, emeralds; the blue, turquoises; the purple, amethysts. . . . Aladdin took the lamp, and rubbed it in the same place as before, and immediately the genie appeared. 'Hear me,' said Aladdin, 'I have business of the greatest importance for thee to execute. I have demanded the Princess Badroulboudour in marriage of the Sultan her father; he promised her to

[Continued opposite.



"ALADDIN CROSSED THE GARDEN WITHOUT STOPPING, MOUNTED THE STEPS TO THE TERRACE, AND TOOK DOWN THE LAMP FROM THE NICHE . . . AS HE CAME DOWN, HE STOPPED IN THE GARDEN TO OBSERVE THE FRUIT."

[Continued.]

me, but he has planned to marry her to the Grand Vizier's son. What I ask of you is that you bring them both hither to me.' . . . Aladdin took the lamp and rubbed it; the genie appeared. 'The Sultan,' said Aladdin, 'demands forty large basins of massy gold, brim-full of the fruits of the garden from whence I took this lamp; and these he expects to have carried by as many black slaves, each preceded by a young, handsome, well-made, white slave, richly clothed.' A little while afterwards the genie returned with forty black slaves, each bearing on his head a basin of massy gold full of pearls, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds. After they had all entered before the Sultan's throne, the black slaves laid the basins on the carpet, and all prostrated themselves. When they all rose again, the black slaves uncovered the basins, and then all stood with their arms crossed over their breasts."

From "The Story of Aladdin" in "Fairy Tales from the Arabian Nights." (Dent's "Everyman Library.")



"THE BLACK SLAVES UNCOVERED THE BASINS, AND THEN ALL STOOD WITH THEIR ARMS CROSSED OVER THEIR BREASTS": PART OF ALADDIN'S RETINUE BEARING GIFTS OF MAGNIFICENT JEWELS TO THE SULTAN.



"HEAR ME," SAID ALADDIN, "I HAVE BUSINESS OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE FOR THEE TO EXECUTE: I HAVE DEMANDED THE PRINCESS BADROULBOUDOUR IN MARRIAGE": ALADDIN AND THE GENIE, SLAVE OF THE LAMP.



"Clavering turned his head to watch her entrance. She was young and slim—her figure as she halted at the top of the step-ladder to let the attendant take her traps was very neat."

THE UNSEEN WITNESS.

By VALENTINE WILLIAMS,

Illustrated by W. R. S. STOTT.

Author of "The Man with the Clubfoot," "The Knife Behind the Curtain," "Mannequin," etc.

HERE was a Christmas tree in a corner of the buffet and Christmas smiles brightened the faces of the Customs officers and aerodrome attendants. Under a lowering sky an icy wind swept the flying-ground, and patches of discoloured snow blotched the wheel-scarred grass beyond the cement run-way where the Paris mail 'plane, with propellers idly turning, quietly throbbed.

Clavering pulled his cap down more tightly on his head as, leaving the warmth of the buffet, he faced the raw December air. He seemed to be the only passenger. Christmas Eve: it was not surprising. This was the last outward 'plane from Croydon which would enable expatriate Parisians to be home for Midnight Mass and Réveillon. It was cutting it rather fine; besides, with snow about and this freezing north-easter, air travel was not precisely inviting.

While the steward stowed his suit-case away in the baggage room in the tail of the enormous machine, the passenger took one of the rear seats, where his view was not obscured by the wing, and wrapped his rug about his knees. His clear eyes were a trifle sullen, his not unpleasing features wore a gloomy air. At forty, a man's habits, however much of a rover he may be, are apt to be settled, and this Paris trip, Clavering reflected, was certainly a bore. By this he should have been in the Bentley, Shropshire-bound, to join Aunt Sylvia's customary large and very cheery Christmas party—church in the morning, eighteen holes of golf, a lot to eat and drink at the noisy family gathering, and in the evening dancing, followed by a general rag in the billiard-room.

Disgusting to see all these cheerful faces about him! Disgusting to think that presently, after the last inward 'plane had come swooping down to earth in the early winter twilight, all these officials, so painfully anxious to speed him on his way, would go trooping off to their warm homes, there to light the Christmas tree and romp with the kids. And he, while Old England, making ready to celebrate the feast, faded away beneath the ghostly ground mist, he would be headed out into the brume, the brume which veiled not only the horizon but also this Paris mission of his which lay beyond it.

Through a glass panel in the door at the end of the cabin a Martian-like figure was visible, one great fur paw signing to the conductor. Ear-phones dangled from the tightly-helmeted head—it was the mechanician. The pilot was already in his seat—Clavering had seen him, helmeted

and begoggled, crouched at his lofty perch forward of the vast expanse of wing.

Clavering's eye sought the clock that hung on the cabin wall between aneroid and speedometer. Two minutes to go.

From the wall the "No Smoking" notices in two languages seemed to grin down at him mockingly. With the weather thickening as it was, they would be two hours, at least, in the air—two hours without a cigarette. He groaned inwardly and crooked a finger languidly at the attendant.

That individual, very dapper in his white monkey jacket, was hovering in the background. Like all of his class, he was skilled at taking the measure of men, and his nail was set against the champagnes on the wine-list he produced.

A burst of sound roared shatteringly through the cabin as the twin engines were raced. The whole 'plane trembled. Clavering ordered a small bottle of champagne and leisurely helped himself to cotton wool from the receptacle beside the seat.

"Pint of number five, yessir," said the steward. "The moment we start, Sir. We're off at once; here's the lady coming now."

Clavering, stuffing his ears with cotton wool, stayed his hand on the instant. "A lady?" he questioned ominously.

"Yessir. She came direct by car as she missed the passenger 'bus in London."

With a forlorn gesture the passenger doffed his cap and ran his hand lightly over his smooth hair. A woman, eh? With this cross-wind they were in for a proper bucketing, as like as not, and she'd be sick. Naturally, she'd expect him to fuss over her, hold her head, or something—gosh, this was dreadful!

He glanced through the tiny pane of glass at his elbow. A girl in a leather coat was advancing towards the 'plane. She came hurrying over the muddy ground in animated conversation with a flushed and flustered youth who floundered at her side with a rug over his shoulder, a mauve dressing-bag in one hand and a very shiny mauve hat-box in the other.

Clavering turned his head to watch her entrance. She was young and slim—her figure as she halted at the top of the step-ladder to let the attendant take her traps was very neat. Clavering could not see her face; she had her back to him as she exchanged a parting word with her escort.

She was quite breathless. "Well," Clavering heard her gasp, "we did it. Catch me trusting that foul 'bus of yours again, Guy! Thanks for bringing me all the same. So long, old boy. Be good!"

Her hand went out. A protesting voice exclaimed: "Hang it, it's Christmas, isn't it?"

"Oh, all right." Her tone was resigned. She stooped and delicately offered her cheek. A tangle of tawny hair appeared in the doorway for an



"A jarring impact from which the 'plane rebounded like a ball, a violent shock, a sound of splintering basketwork as the chair gave way under sudden pressure, and she found herself raised up in strong arms, the machine at a standstill, the cabin floor sloping precipitately away."

instant. Then a hand fluttered, the cabin door was slammed, and the next instant the note of the engines deepened to a louder, fiercer, more insistent uproar. The whole fabric of the 'plane was shaken with a sort of convulsion. Pieces of paper, blades of grass, whirled past the narrow windows. The girl was in the aisle between the seats, gazing tentatively about her.

Clavering glanced despairingly round for the attendant. He was busy at the luggage-boot. Clavering tore some wool from the holder at his side and offered it to the girl, at the same time pointing at his ears. The 'plane was taxi-ing forward and, clear of the run-way, went lurching and bouncing over the grass.

The girl took the wool. Her eyes were grateful. Though her lips moved in speech, her words were swallowed up in the clamour. Her small black hat, which left the forehead free, framed a nicely oval face with rather attractive eyes. Her eyes were bright with the spirit of adventure and her cheeks flushed with her run through the raw air.

The 'plane, swinging to turn into the wind, gave a frightful lurch. The girl made a grab at space, steadied herself with a hand on the back of a chair and was about to sit down when, with a din that waxed in a swift, incessant crescendo to an ear-splitting, steady roar, the 'plane shot out over the grass. The girl's legs went from under her and she was neatly deposited upon Clavering's knees.

Her face brushed his. Her cheek was astonishingly soft, and there was a faint odour of lavender water about her which was very agreeable. She scrambled to her feet, flushed, confused. "I'm terribly sorry," she said, "but I've never been up in an aeroplane before."

The steward had dashed forward. But already Clavering was settling her down in the chair across the aisle from his.

"Sit there," he shouted above the din of the propellers. "You'll see the country better. And if you don't want to be deaf for a week, shove that wool in your ears."

She obeyed him, grasping the arm of her chair rather tightly with one hand and peering out through the window at her side. They were off the ground now, and the roofs and the tarred roads, the greenish-yellow grass and shimmering flood patches of winter England dropped below. The wind kept tearing at them as they mounted; with an occasional short, sharp jerk the machine responded to the controls. Clutching her chair with both hands, the girl cried softly "O-oh!" and "Ah!" and from time to time ventured a frightened glance about her.

The steward placed the champagne and a glass in the grooved tray in front of Clavering's seat. The young man pointed at the glass and raised two fingers. The attendant padded away, and Clavering leaned across to the girl. "Do you suffer from sea-sickness?" he asked.

She turned a scared face to his. "What do you say?" she cried.

"Do you ever suffer from sea-sickness?"

"I can't hear!"

On that he filled the glass, and standing up, glass in hand, lowered his lips to her ear. "Are you ever sea-sick?" he bellowed.

She nodded emphatically. "Almost always."

He produced the glass from behind his back. "Then drink this!" he bawled.

She hesitated, but he thrust the glass at her and she drained it. "Thanks terribly," she said, as she handed it back to him.

"Feel all right?" he shouted.

She nodded, smiling. "Only a bit scared." Then, perceiving that he had not heard her, she put up her hand and drew his head down to hers in a very simple gesture. "I suppose it's all right when she drops like that. Oh, my aunts and uncles, there she goes again!"

Clavering laughed, looking into her rather earnest face. "We're as safe as houses. It'll be easier riding when we're up a bit higher. Look, we're climbing through the clouds now."

Wisps of vapour were streaming like thin smoke between the struts of the wings. The crazy patchwork of the English countryside far below peeped in and out of obese masses of puffy grey-white cloud hanging with a sort of sullen obstinacy in space. Unheralded, a broad shaft of sunlight glinted on the yellow canvas of the wings. Through a gap in the drifting storm-wrack that ceilinged their world, a ragged fragment of brilliantly blue sky was discernible. Between the 'plane and the distant earth iridescent shades tinged the pendent storm-wrack.

The girl gave a cry. "How unutterably lovely!"

He had not resumed his seat. He remained perched on the arm of her chair, his arm along the back. "That's the lure of flying. You never seem to get to the end of the cloud effects. . . ."

"Have you flown much?"

He nodded. "I'd adore to be able to fly." She stretched out her hand. "Oh, look at that mass of cloud ahead! Did you ever see such colours? Gold-brown laid on dark blue—it's too heavenly!"

He wrinkled up his nose. "That's on the coast. A bit of dirty weather. We'll go above it, I shouldn't wonder—these mail 'planes fly the Channel pretty high. Hand me that glass of yours."

The steward had brought the other glass, and Clavering and his fellow passenger finished the bottle between them. Thereafter, their *fortissimo* conversation languished, the girl staring out as though entranced, Clavering looking down on her from his perch on the arm of her chair. As he had prophesied, as they gained height the motion became steadier, and they stood out over the Channel, above the flats of Romney Marsh, on a fairly even keel. Far below, in and out of swollen, leaden-hued rain-clouds, the sea emerged like a frozen lake gashed and marbled by the marks of skaters. Only by watching closely was it possible to make out the slow, slow heave and realise that the curious markings were the crests of breakers—white horses. They sighted the afternoon boat, seemingly motionless under a brown smoke-pall, and some fishing-smacks, no bigger than match-heads, stationary under canvas. In the distance the French coast was a purplish blur, edged with gold and topped by a rampant, immobile frieze of cirrus with silvered edges.

Presently the girl felt a tap on her shoulder. She inclined her head. "Going to Paris for Christmas?" said Clavering.

"Not properly. I'm coming back to-morrow."

"Bad flying weather. Why did you fly?"

"I have an appointment in Paris this evening."

"You could have gone by train. . . ."

"There wasn't time. Shall we arrive punctually, do you think?"

He glanced up at the clock. "We're a bit behind. We might be half an hour late. What time's your appointment?"

"Eight o'clock."

"Oh, you'll make it in stacks of time. . . . Hullo!"

The noise of the propellers had suddenly diminished. Clavering turned to the attendant. "He's cut out one of the engines, hasn't he?"

"Sounds like it, Sir. He probably don't see too well, it's that thick. Ah, there she goes again!"

The roar recommenced, full-throated, unabated. Clavering was suddenly aware that the girl had grasped his hand, that her hand still lay in his. At the same time he realised that he had spent nearly an hour and a quarter in the air without being bored, without being particularly conscious of the cold, without feeling the craving for a smoke. As he scanned his companion's face in profile now, their clasped hands establishing, as it were, a bond of sympathy, of magnetism, between them, he became aware, as though for the first time, of the charming serenity of her expression, a sort of trusting ingenuousness that aroused all his protective instincts. She was alarmed, he knew—as flying went, the going had been pretty rough, and again and again his experience had noted the exceptional skill of the pilot—but she was making a brave fight to keep her feelings under control. She was plucky all right. And very charming too. . . .

He bent to her, as though a sudden impulse prompted him. "What are you doing to-night?"

She turned, and only then appeared to realise that he was holding her hand. Simply, unaffectedly, she withdrew it. "I've told you already, I have an appointment."

"So have I—at dinner-time. But what about later in the evening? We could go up to Montmartre and have a look at the Réveillon. . . ."

She shook her head. "I don't know if I shall be free. Look, we're across already."

There were dark patches marking the shallows on the strange wine-coloured mirror beneath them, and beyond that creamy smears, like daubs of Chinese white on a palette, where at the tide's edge the lighter dappling of a desolate shore merged in the ocean's more sombre tints. But Clavering refused to be put off. "Are you meeting friends in Paris?" he persisted.

But just then, with a suddenness that was like a stab in their ears, the thunderous crepitation of the engines ceased. The 'plane seemed to swim out upon a great lake of blissful silence. Clavering's voice fell, oddly clear, upon the stillness. "We're going down," he said.

The wind whistled shrilly in their ears as though, with eager hands, it sought to stay their vertiginous descent. Streamers of mist, like ghostly fingers, streaked the windows. The girl was aware of the attendant somewhere in the background, quiet, rather tense. She heard Clavering say: "If he can't make Berck aerodrome, he'll land in the dunes. There's a goodish pitch back of the . . ."

His grip, firm and comforting, was on her arm. "Brace yourself!" he commanded sharply. A wall of grayish whiteness flashed past the windows, a vista of sand dotted with the sable shapes of bushes. Then there was a jarring impact, from which the 'plane rebounded like a ball, a violent shock, a sound of splintering basketwork as a chair gave way under a sudden pressure, and she found herself raised up in strong arms, the machine at a standstill, the cabin floor sloping precipitately away.

Clavering set the girl down on her feet. "Forced landing!" he observed. "It might have been worse. The point is now, how the devil are we going to get on to Paris? Where's that steward chap?"

The steward had jumped to the ground and gone round to the front of the 'plane to inspect the damage. Clavering shouted to him, and after a while he came back. He reported that one of the engines had developed a defect, but, worse than this, the machine had crumpled up a landing-wheel in landing. He was going to the next village to get help, but it was doubtful if the 'plane could be repaired in time to resume its flight that afternoon.

"Now, see here, son," said Clavering quietly, "I'm not hanging round here while any repairs are done. I have to be in Paris by eight o'clock, and I want a car, and I want it quick. It must be the best part of a hundred and fifty miles to Paris from this engaging seaside resort, and if that car is to be of any use it must be here inside of the next half-hour. Fix it, and there's a fiver for yourself. The price don't matter. The bigger and faster the car, the better. Savvy?"

The steward savvied. As has been remarked, he knew human nature. He would raise a car all right, he announced. A moment later he had scrambled into his overcoat and was off across the dunes.

II.

The girl was nervous, distracted. In a fever of impatience she paced the sand. At their backs the breakers thundered on the beach. The melancholy call of the gulls, the occasional whistle of a curlew, echoed across the solitudes. Invisible within the vitals of the stranded machine, the pilot and his aide tinkered with the engine. The murmur of their voices, the chink of metal upon metal, faded the brooding silence.

"Listen," said the girl, her hands clasped desperately together, "you don't know what this means to me. It's absolutely essential that I should be in Paris at eight. . . ."

Her intense earnestness brought a whimsical expression to Clavering's face. "Why?"

"It means money to me, a lot of money."

"Does money mean so much to you? Sorry, perhaps I shouldn't have asked that."

"You're an understanding person, I believe; I can tell you. You see, I'm broke. I run a hat shop in town and—well, I'm up against it. By an almost miraculous chance I have the opportunity to make a hundred pounds. But my luck's dead out. First the car breaks down and I nearly miss the 'plane, and then we have to get stuck in this ghastly. . . ."

"Listen!" said Clavering quietly. The lowering sky was suddenly instinct with the metallic clang of propellers. As they watched they saw an aeroplane come nosing out of a cloud-bank, circling languidly down. Their pilot had sighted it too. From the driving seat of the machine, sprawling with its tail in the air, he was signalling with his scarf.

"It's a Moth," said Clavering. "And, by George, I believe it's coming down!" With a rush, the stranger swooped and went roaring by over their heads so close that, instinctively, the girl ducked. A begoggled face peered down from the cockpit. Then the 'plane zoomed up, turned, and began to circle once more.

"Look," said Clavering. He was pointing at a greenish rectangle of ground about two hundreds yards away where the dunes ended. "That's where we were making for. If he's going to land, he'll land there. Ah, what did I say?"

The stranger was wheeling over the plot in ever-diminishing circles, now gliding down, now zooming up. Then, in a flash as it were, he was scudding across the grassland. Now the 'plane had come to a halt. Two muffled figures descended.

Clavering had gone a few paces ahead and, from a little eminence, was watching the scene. Presently the girl saw him swing sharply about and come running towards her. "Quick!" he cried. He clutched her wrist and made her run with him. He headed for the beach where, behind a high rampart of sand, tufted with whinnies, he flung himself down and pulled her to the ground beside him.

"Now listen, and don't ask questions!" he said, before she could



"Listen," said the girl, her hands clasped desperately together, "you don't know what this means to me. It's absolutely essential that I should be in Paris at eight. . . ."

find breath to speak. "You want to go to Paris, don't you? Well, you're going with me in that 'plane that has just come down. But the fellows that came in her mustn't see me; do you understand? They're on their way across the dunes to our 'plane now. While they're ploughing through the sand we can get along the beach to their Moth. It's now or never, see? Are you on?"

"You mean you're going to fly off in their machine?"

His clear eyes met hers unflinchingly. "That's the idea. Are you game?"

A glint of mischief came into her mobile face. For the fraction of an instant she hesitated. "All right," she said.

"Got your passport?"

She showed her handbag. "What about my luggage?"

"Can't stop for that. Follow me, and keep your head down."

A short run and they were on their faces again behind the rampart at the top of the shore peering through the branches of a stunted bush at two silhouettes just discernible beside the stranded 'plane. Over to the left the Moth, looking very dapper against its green background, was poised on a grassy flat protected from the sea by dykes. Clavering and his companion slithered over the ramp and dropped into the polder. Here the stranded mail 'plane was out of their view. Three minutes later they stood beside the Moth.

Clavering lost no time. Almost before the girl knew it, they were off the ground. The noise deafened her, the wind buffeted her face, numbing her faculties, blurring the detail of that perilous take-off—engine roaring, the machine lurching forward, and this bizarre companion of hers hauling himself, even as the little 'plane began to slide away, into the driving-seat. It was the sight of his face, lit by an elfin, exultant grin, turned to hers, of his hand pointed earthwards, that brought her to her senses. She risked a glance over the side. Two tiny figures were running aimlessly across the dunes, gesticulating frantically.

III.

There was a vast glare in the night sky of Paris this Christmas Eve. From end to end the Grands Boulevards blazed with electricity, façades alive with letters of fire that flared and died, twinkling with moving emblems, tumbling figures, shop-windows streaming with radiance. An unending clamour went up from the Christmas booths lining the sidewalks; the shouts of hawkers, the many-toned squeakings of innumerable toys. Shoppers thronged the pavements, their chatter and laughter out-toning the din.

Turning his back on the merriment and brightness of the boulevard, Miles Clavering gained the dimness of the Place de la Trinité and headed northward towards the high ground of Montmartre. In an ill-lit side street he slackened his pace at the sight of the name "Restaurant Gatchina" flashing from a sign. There was Russian lettering on the window, and behind the glass an advertisement of a troupe of Russian dancers appearing there nightly. Beside the main entrance a side door stood open, revealing a flight of stairs with the legend "Entrée des Salons."

A *maître d'hôtel*, blue-chinned and dark, with the impassive mien of one who is past being surprised, confronted Clavering on the stairs. "Monsieur désire?" The hard eye mustered the newcomer.

"I reserved a room," said Clavering. "Number Five. The name is Peters."

The *maître d'hôtel* consulted a list. "Parfaitement. If Monsieur will step this way. . . ."

It was evident that the celebration had already started at the Restaurant Gatchina. Sounds of merry-making echoed along the florid white-and-gold corridor to which they mounted. "One begins early," Clavering remarked, as the *maître d'hôtel* pushed open one of a series of numbered doors.

"C'est la fête," was the dispassionate reply.

With its fly-blown mirrors, its panelling crudely adorned with paintings of pink and fleshy nymphs, its crimson upholstery and gilt furniture, Salon Number Five had a vaguely obscene air. Within the room it was quite obvious that the revellers were next door. Squeals of feminine laughter, snatches of song, came through the panelling. In the centre a table was laid for two, with a written menu-card in a little stand. A bottle of champagne, unopened, stood in an ice-bucket.

"Monsieur expects a lady?" said the *maître d'hôtel*, as he helped Clavering off with his overcoat.

"Yes."

"Monsieur has ordered dinner, I think?"

Clavering's eye dropped to the menu-card. "Yes. You can start serving when Madame arrives."

"Bien, monsieur." The *maître d'hôtel* departed.

Clavering watched him go; then, slipping into the corridor, tried the door-handle of the adjoining room. Finding the door locked, he rapped softly—two short knocks and a long. The door was opened noiselessly.

Two men and two girls were in the room, which smelt of food and perfume. The men were in dinner coats, their companions of the *revue*-girl type. The party was at dinner. A sudden silence descended upon the room on Clavering's appearance.

"Eh, bien?" said the man who had opened the door, a blonde fellow, thick-set. Without speaking, Clavering drew a card from his waistcoat pocket and held it up for the other to see. The man bowed. "All is in order, *mon capitaine*," he said softly.

"You are ready for him when he comes?"

"Since a little half-hour, *mon capitaine*." Then, seeing that Clavering's eye roamed round the room, "We show nothing for fear of surprise. But it is a matter of seconds. . . ."

Clavering nodded. "If he arrives before the woman, he's to be detained at all costs; is that understood?"

"Parfaitement, *mon capitaine*."

"I only want five minutes with her. Then he can come in. . . ."

"As Monsieur directs. He has only to rap the partition when he is ready. . . ."

"What about the *maître d'hôtel*?"

The man smiled loftily. "One of us, *mon capitaine*."

Clavering laughed. "You fellows think of everything, it seems."

"One does what one can, *mon capitaine*."

Clavering consulted his watch. "Ten minutes to eight. Is that right?"

"Within a minute or so. . . ."

"À tantôt, then. . . ."

"À tantôt, *mon capitaine*."

They shook hands, and Clavering stole back to Salon Number Five.

He switched on all the lights—centre-lights, a lamp on the mantelpiece, and a lamp on the table—and lit a cigarette. Then, eyes watchful, face rather grim, he sat down to wait. His vigil was not long. After a minute or so there were footsteps in the corridor and he heard the *maître d'hôtel*'s deferential "It is here, Mademoiselle!" Then the door opened.

The amazement in his face as he rose up from the table was so unfeigned that it disconcerted the girl. In her small black hat and neat leather coat she stared at him tongue-tied, her eyes big with astonishment. The *maître d'hôtel* had closed the door. The passengers of the Christmas Air Mail were alone in the room together.

The surprise faded out of his face and gave place to a stern and menacing air. He

was the first to break the silence.

"Well, Miss Galloway," he demanded, "what have you got to say for yourself?"

But she was speechless.

"Let me recall the facts to your mind," he said. "At considerable risk to myself, and in order to oblige you, I, a perfect stranger, steal an aeroplane and land you safely in Paris. At the aerodrome, naturally, there's trouble about the aeroplane's papers. Thanks to a private pull of mine, I'm able to arrange matters satisfactorily with the authorities, but it takes a little time. There happens to be one solitary taxi at the aerodrome, and, at my suggestion, you're escorted to it to wait for me. What do you do? You pinch the taxi—my taxi—and leave me stranded at a god-forsaken spot miles outside Paris. You ought to be ashamed of yourself!"

She hitched her shoulders forlornly. "I know it was rotten of me. But I was afraid we might both be held up over those aeroplane papers and I might miss this appointment of mine. And I simply couldn't afford to lose that hundred quid. If I'd had the least idea that you were Mr. Peters. . . . Why on earth didn't you tell me?"

"How was I to know who you were? Did you tell me your name?"

She smiled at him wistfully. "I don't believe I did. But I've got something for you."

With a stony face he watched her open her bag and take from it a sealed envelope. She handed it over. After a casual glance at it he laid it on the table.

[Continued on page 35.]



"A short run, and they were on their faces again behind the rampart at the top of the shore peering through the branches of a stunted bush at two silhouettes just discernible beside the stranded 'plane.'"



That night he sat silent and wrathful on his throne, not noticing the singing-girls who sat obediently at his feet, waiting for him to command their song.

TIARE TAHITI. A POLYNESIAN LEGEND.

Retold by ALEC WAUGH,
Author of "The Coloured Countries," "Three Score and Ten," etc.

Illustrations by LÉON CARRÉ.

THERE are some peoples that have no written history: whose story is handed down in song and fable, changing with the changing outlooks of children and great grandchildren. There are some peoples who do not see their history in terms of dates and conquests and beleaguered towns; certain self-contained peoples whose curiosity goes no further than a brooding wonderment: "Why are we here, whence do we come, whither do we go?"; who seek only for an explanation of their immediate background.

The Polynesian is such a people.

Most days during the weeks I spent on the island of Moorea, a native girl from the village of Papetoai would row across the bay to the house where I was staying. During the mornings she would fish and swim with us; diving under the clear, pale water, her black hair spread out in a fan behind her. In the evenings she would take her ukelele and sing in her soft, crooning voice the soft Tahitian tunes, for which the ears of those who have once heard them will be always lonely. Sometimes, seated on the verandah, her feet drawn beneath her white-and-red patterned *pareo*, she would tell us the stories of her people; the legends by which the Polynesian explains the nature of the phenomena that surround him: that tell why the milk of the coconut is sweet upon the tongue, why at nightfall a cool wind blows seawards from the hills, why the streams are plentiful with fish. Many of her stories have been collected and retold by one who has made his home there.*

One later legend, however, he did not tell.

For several days we had not seen Nadia. And when at last we saw her ground her canoe upon the beach before the house, we burst out laughing. On her face was a look of serene contentment, and behind her left ear was the white tiare flower.

"We know now why you have been away," we said.

She looked downward, demurely, a smile playing on her mouth.

"I am very happy," she replied.

That evening she sang with a deeper, tenderer note that sweetest of Polynesian songs—

*Ave, ave te vahini upipi
E patia tona, e pareo repo.*

It was a typical island night; warm and scented. And she was a part, exquisitely, of that loveliness; in harmony with the soft scents, the low wash of the sea upon the coral, and the moon-silvered palm fronds.

"Tell us, Nadia," we asked, "why is it that you wear that flower behind your ear?"

She widened her eyes wonderingly.

"But you must know that," she said. "I had thought that was the first thing one was told on coming to the islands."

"Oh, yes, we know that," we told her. "But the history, the significance of those white petals?"

"They are the finger-tips of Tehaura, Princess of Taravao."

"And who was she, Nadia?"

"The beloved of Atahoe, Prince of Paca."

She answered solemnly, in the deep, almost abstract, tone that her voice assumed when she spoke of her people's legends. And it was slowly, solemnly, in a French that had almost a Biblical austerity, that she began her story.

Tehaura, she said, was the most beautiful woman that had been ever born of mortals; so beautiful that the spirits who guard the narrow isthmus of Taravao and the broad valley of Papara vowed that her beauty should never pass beyond their limits; that it must remain to enrich permanently the loveliest district of the world's loveliest island.

"Then how, in that case, shall she marry," her father asked, "since there is no one in the district worthy of her? And the Princes of Papenoo and Paca and Tautira will wish to take her away with them to their own places."

"If there is no stranger worthy of her, who loves her enough to be content to remain here with her, then must she perforce stay virgin and unwed in Taravao."

The Princess bowed her head. "I am well content," she said.

And so, on the high spur of land that overlooks the isthmus, she had herself built a throne, set round with the rich foliage of the island's growth, the red and white of the hibiscus, the stately plumes of the bamboo, the scarlet and gold of the flamboyant. Day long she would lie there, her eyes fixed broodingly on the high outline of Tautira, while the handmaidens who served her would plait wreaths of flowers for her head, and knot white bands of shark's teeth for her wrists and ankles; setting before her when the sun was high breadfruit and *poi* and *fei*, and the small-finned fish that their brothers speared in the cool valleys, flavouring them with the thick drained milk of a green coconut.

And afterwards, while she slept, they would fan her with the long, jagged leaves of the banana plant; later, when the sun lowered on to Papara, they would accompany her when she went down to the grey-black beach to bathe. And in the evening when the air was cool, and the moon had risen goldenly above the isthmus, they would sing to her their soft island songs, and she would lie there, listening and silent.

* "The Golden Octopus." By Viscount Hastings.

Every day it was like that; except once a month, on the morning when the moon was full. Then they would set out, she and her twenty handmaidens, to the round pool in the hills, whose side is worn so smooth with the movement of the streams that you can slide down fifteen feet of rock into the clear, cool water. And all day long they would stay there, clambering up to the smooth rock, laughing as they were rushed down its slippery flank into the chill water, picnicking off wild fruit and the shrimps they had speared in the streams on their way up.

In the whole month this was the only time that the Princess left the high shadow of her throne. And it was as she was on the way to this pool that she met in the roadway, coming to meet her, a young man, tall and strong and handsome. He was the tallest, strongest, most handsome man that she had ever seen. A man, too, who was strange to her, who did not move to one side humbly, bowing as she passed, but stood upright in her path, his eyes fixed on hers. They were dark eyes: keen and burning, and her knees felt weak.

Her voice as she spoke, however, was firm and regal. "What is your name?" she asked.

"My name is Atahoe. I am Prince of Paea."

"My name is Tehaura. I am Princess of Taravao. What road are you taking through our district?"

"If you would see Moorea," he said, "you must desert your arbours." And as he spoke, the weakness and the love of weakness strengthened in Tehaura's heart.

"But the spirits that guard the valley of Papara have sworn that I shall never pass," she whispered.

"The spirits of Paea are stronger than the spirits of Papara," said Atahoe. "After the meal, when the women sleep, we will steal down to the beach and make our way by sea through the reef to my district, where the spirits of my district will take care of you."

Quicker than usual it seemed that afternoon to the handmaidens of Tehaura that sleep came upon the eyelids of their Princess. The meal had been scarcely half-an-hour finished before the sound of steady breathing mingled with the trickle of the water into the pool.

Rested upon his elbow Atahoe watched the handmaidens of Tehaura fall one by one asleep. When the sound of even breathing had come from the last outstretched figure, he lifted himself and, moving over to Tehaura, touched her on the shoulder. Quietly, scarcely breathing, they hurried back down the valley towards the beach.

On the edge of the road that skirts the island was a small bamboo hut, roofed with the dried boughs of the coconut palm. In the doorway of the hut an old man was sitting.



... he drew out through the reef, past the bright groves of coral and the many-coloured fish, and in the declining sunlight paddled his way towards the headland of Tautira.

"Yours." And, turning, he followed at her side through the cool shadows of the valley; not speaking, but helping her with outstretched hand to leap from stone to stone, pausing now and again to stab at the shrimps and small-finned fishes that darted between the rocks. It was not till they had reached the pool, had bathed and were sitting beside the rock while the women were preparing the meal, that at last he spoke.

"You are the most beautiful woman," he said, "that I have ever seen. I was on my way to Tautira to choose myself a bride. But there is no need for me to cross the isthmus of Taravao. You will return with me to Paea."

His voice was tender, and his eyes were bright, and in the heart of Tehaura came suddenly weakness and a love of weakness. Nevertheless, she shook her head.

"You are the strongest and handsomest man that I have ever seen, but I cannot go with you to Paea. The spirits have decreed that I shall never cross the isthmus of Taravao or the broad valley of Papara."

"Then you will never see the island of Moorea."

"Why should I wish to see it? Have I not my shaded arbour and my many flowers? And is there not, across the water, the unchanging outline of Tautira?"

"To the eyes that have not seen Moorea, the outline of Tautira is the loveliest thing beneath the moon. But the eyes have not seen beauty that have not seen Moorea."

And wooingly, in tender phrases, he spoke of the towered grandeur of that sister island; of its high pinnacles, of the aureole of lights that play upon it—the rose of dawn, the lilac and gold of sunset, the greens and browns and purples of the mid-day heat. And all his praise of Moorea was a wooing of her; a turning of her away from her shaded arbour to the sharing of another life.

"If you will wait here an instant I will go down to the beach," said Atahoe, "and arrange for a boat." And the old man he charged to watch over Tehaura, to let no one enter, to let no one know she was within.

"Guard her well," he said, and hurried down to the beach, to where some fishermen were busy with their nets. He strode straight up to them, and, breaking the band of pearls and shark's teeth that was about his neck, "Take these," he said, "for one day's use of your canoe."

Within three minutes he was bounding back excitedly to the little hut beside the road. In the road outside the hut, however, there was no old man sitting. "So that is how he guards," thought Atahoe. "He would suffer for that if I had time."

Which he had not; he knew already doubtless that the handmaidens of his beloved would be searching for their charge along the valley, spreading the news of the escape. Eagerly he bounded into the hut: to pause, astounded, on the threshold. "Empty," he cried, "empty!"

From the doorway above his head he heard a grunt; and lifting his eyes he saw the old man tied up against the roof. His first instinct was to drive his spear through the wretch's body. But he stayed his hand, knowing that there were questions that must be set. Before he had time to put them, however, the blubbing explanation had been given. The old man was distraught with fear. A great wind had caught him up, he said. Unseen hands had tied him there. The damsel had vanished before his eyes. With a heavy heart Atahoe listened. So the spirits of Papara had prevailed. For this one time, at least, he added.

Wearily he walked out into the high road. And with his back turned on Tautira and the bride he had come questing, he trudged back to Paea.

That night he sat silent and wrathful on his throne, not noticing the singing-girls who sat obediently at his feet, waiting for him to command their song. "By land," he thought, "the spirits of Papara and Taravao



Day long she would lie there, her eyes fixed broodingly on the high outline of Tautira, while the handmaidens who served her would plait wreaths of flowers for her head, and knot white bands of shark's teeth for her wrists and ankles.



... with a cry, he straightened. "My loved one, my beloved! . . . I have found you! I have found you!"

are all-powerful. But surely by sea they have no authority. To-morrow, when she bathes at sundown, I will take her away in my canoe."

So on the following afternoon, when the sun was sinking below its height, he drew out through the reef, past the bright groves of coral, and the many-coloured fish, and in the declining sunlight paddled his way towards the headland of Tautira

As the first stars were beginning to show through the pale violet of the sky, he turned the prow of his canoe into the bay below the shaded arbour. And there, bathing with her handmaidens, was Tehaura, and his heart leapt at the sight of her, and at the sound of the soft gasp that her voice gave at the sight of him. As he drew close, she lifted her arms out of the water and called to him. "Come quickly, oh, come quickly!" Her voice was breathless with her need of him. But as he bent down to lift her out of the water into his canoe, at the very instant that her arms met behind his neck, the smooth softness of her arms became slippery and cold, so that he shuddered, and suddenly there was no weight upon his neck, nor any longer in his nostrils the scent of coconut from her hair, and in his arms was lightness, and beside his boat there was a splash and a long eel dived beneath it, lithering away towards the beach. Aghast, his eyes gazed on emptiness and his ears heard the wail of the handmaidens. Once again the spirits of Papara had prevailed.

But it was to be for the last time. Of that he was resolved. Next morning he gathered together the dozen or so men of his own bodyguard. "This time," he said, "we will take guard against the spirits. We will surround Tehaura in her shaded arbour so that neither men nor spirits can take her from us."

And so that night, in their canoes, they sailed out in the moonlight through the reef, and when morning came they were placed, each of them at his post, about the arbour. With ropes and a long net, they had drawn a circle round her so that there should be no escape. Quietly they waited; waited till the sun was high; till all was quiet after the mid-day meal; till sleep had fallen on to the shaded arbour. Then, with a cry, Atahoe leapt into the circle that his men had drawn, and with a cry Tehaura and the handmaidens woke from sleep. Frightened and panting, the young women scattered to the circle's edge. But Tehaura sat still upon her wooden throne. At the sight of Atahoe her eyes had widened, she spread out her arms and her lips moved.

But as Atahoe sprang it seemed to those watching that he sprang into the heart of fire. It was as though a mantle of flame had fallen about Tehaura and her plants and flowers. And to those watching it seemed that Atahoe stumbled like one blinded. "My loved one!" he cried, "I have lost her. I cannot find her. In vain I seek her!" And he bent his head low into his flame. The flame was white, and it seemed that his right ear, as it bent down, was covered with a white flower of fire. Then, suddenly, with a cry, he straightened. "My loved one, my beloved!" he called out, "I have found you! I have found you!" It seemed as though some dark bough was wrapped about his neck. "It is the brown arm of Tehaura," whispered the handmaidens; and the fingers of the dark bough caressed his neck, lying softly over his left ear, like a fiery flower. Then, suddenly, fire and shadow were alike extinguished, and where had stood the throne of Tehaura and, Tehaura herself and Atahoe was a tree with low boughs and white, sweet-smelling flowers. "The spirits that are all-powerful," said the handmaidens, "have taken their revenge and given their reward."

And those who had watched remembered how a white flower of flame had lain behind Atahoe's right ear when he had called, "I seek my love!" And a white flower of flame behind his left ear when he had cried, "I have found my love!" And so, in memory of the two lovers who had conspired against the spirits that guard the narrow isthmus of Taravao and the broad valley of Papara the bodyguard and the handmaidens went forward and plucked flowers from the tree, and those that were in search of love placed a flower behind their right ear and those that were happy in love put the flower behind the left ear. And the roots of the tree were taken and planted throughout the island and its sister island. And in memory of Tehaura and Atahoe the Polynesians have all time held as a symbol of love that sweet-smelling flower that once to have smelt is to be lonely for forever.

And that is the story as Nadia told it to us on the verandah of a Moorean bungalow, with a smile of content upon her lips, and behind her left ear the sweet-smelling bloom of the tiare.

THE END.



UNDER THE "MISTLETOE" OF FANTASY.

FROM THE PAINTING BY PAUL MAK (COPYRIGHT RESERVED).



"THE KISS."

This charming piece of decorative fantasy, which rather suggests the pale wraiths of the tragic lovers in Flecker's "Hassan" re-united in an eastern Paradise, is the work of that brilliant Russian artist, Paul Mak, of whose art several previous examples have appeared in our pages. He escaped from Russia at

the time of the Revolution and was at one time Court-painter to the Shah of Persia. An exhibition of Paul Mak's Persian studies was held in London, at the Leicester Galleries, two years ago. His sojourn in Persia evidently influenced his art and gave him a taste for the exuberant intricacies of oriental decoration.



THE REAL CHRISTMAS AS IT USED TO BE; WITH SNOWY STREETS AND A FROZEN THAMES: LONDON IN THE "GREAT FROST" OF 1683.

Many a time has the river Thames been fast locked in Winter's icy grip. In olden days, when its bed was much wider, ice would form at the sides and, as the frost increased, would extend from bank to bank. There can be little doubt, too, that Old London Bridge, with its narrow arches and huge piers, contributed to this. The floating ice was massed against these piers and heaped up on the starlings, with the result that the intervals became narrower still and were soon frozen over. In the very cold winter of 1683-4 it is recorded that forest trees and even oaks were split by the frost: most of the hollies were killed and the Thames on this occasion was frozen over with ice eleven inches thick. Evelyn, the diarist, describes how he crossed the river to Lambeth Palace, on the ice, which had become thick enough to bear not only streets of booths in which meat was roasted, but to hold divers shops of

wares, as in a town; and carts and horses passed over. Coaches plied on the ice from Westminster to the Temple; while sleds, sliding with "skeetes," bull-baiting, horse-and-coach races, puppet plays and interludes, tippling shops and other lewd places, made the scene like a bacchanalian Triumph or a carnival on the ice. The accompanying discomforts were naturally numerous, one of the chief being the fact that, by the excessive cold of the air hindering the ascent of the smoke, London became so filled with fumes that one could hardly see across the streets, and lungs were so choked, that breathing was difficult. In this picture by Jan Griffier the Elder Westminster Abbey is on the left; without, of course, any Houses of Parliament between it and the water's edge; behind it is Whitehall, which was partly burnt down in 1691. On the right may be seen Lambeth Palace.



A JAPANESE PARALLEL TO THE SIRENS: KOREMOCHI AND DEMON WOMEN IN A NO DANCE-DRAMA, "MOMIJIGARI" ("THE MAPLE PICNIC"). The Shogun Koremochi, deer-hunting in the mountains, meets a party of women picnicking under maple trees bright with autumn tints. Their leader's dwelling is represented symbolically by the outline of a house, green-curtained, with maple foliage above. The hostess entertains the Shogun with feast and dancing, and he sinks into drunken sleep. The women are really mountain demons luring him to death, but his ancestral god sends a messenger to awaken him, and a magic sword, wherewith Koremochi overcomes the demons.

A STAGE "LAND OF MAKE-BELIEVE": JAPANESE NO PLAYS AND THEIR SYMBOLISM.

By ZOE KINCAID.

(See Illustrations on the opposite Page, and Pages 32 to 34).

SINCE the unmistakable modern tendency of art is toward simplicity and the concentration on essentials, the No stage of Japan, after waiting five centuries, has apparently arrived at the psychological moment when its contribution to the new movements of the West may be most welcome and timely. Thus it may be proved that there are things that have long been old in the East and yet are new to the West—but awaiting the fulness of time to gain recognition. The word No, used to designate a certain kind of Japanese stage performance, is of obscure origin, and scholars hold different theories as to its etymology. One view is that it means talent or accomplishment, while another is that No was an old Buddhist term, referring to the unity of inner life brought about between the audience, players, musicians and chorus. The term Nogaku, or No-music, has come to be used in modern times, but this seems as inadequate as No-dance, so commonly and wrongly used by Occidentals. Neither No-music nor No-dance is appropriate to an art that unites drama, music, the dance and singing so closely; indeed, it is impossible to call the whole by one of its parts.

One actor of first importance dominates the No stage, and he is called the "shite." The secondary actor, the "waki," always remains an assistant and contributes to the work of the chief player. They may be compared to the protagonist and the deuteragonist of the Greek stage. This does not mean that merely two actors occupy the stage, for there may be any number of assistants to both the shite and waki, whose gorgeous brocade costumes add to the spectacular nature of some of the performances. The chorus and musicians complete the stage personnel. Thus the chief actor becomes the pivot of the play. This makes for the unity and balance of a performance.

Simplicity is uppermost on the severely plain stage. At the four ends of the square platform are pillars supporting a heavy, temple-like roof. Adjoining the stage on the left is the hashigakari (Bridge-to-speak), a long bridge-passage used for some of the most striking features of the No performances—the entrances and exits, picturesque postures of fantastic dancers, and movements of a number of actors to suggest they

are on a journey, or other action the play demands. This passage is roofed over, and has a low balustrade on the side facing the audience. Along this are placed three small living pine trees, marking stations for the actors, who calculate with their feet, since they do not see when masked. At the end of the passage is a gay curtain. To the ends of this are attached bamboo poles, and boy attendants raise or lower the curtain for the strange creatures of the No to enter or depart.

On the wooden wall of the background of the stage is painted an idealised pine tree, with wide-spreading branches, symbolic of the out-of-door period of the No, when performances were given before a shrine or temple beneath the trees. Before the play begins, the musicians take their place at the back-centre of the stage. The flute-player heads the procession both on the appearance of the musicians and when leaving, which suggests a parallel with the Greek stage. The instruments of the No are three drums and a flute.

When the orchestra has taken up its position, the members of the chorus file in, not in the dignified fashion of the musicians, but unobtrusively through a small door to the right of the stage, and kneel in two rows to the right. On a stage that is so frankly and uncompromisingly devoted to the exploitation of the unreal, there is no place whatever for the elaborate system of the painted scenery which has been brought into use in the Western theatre. At first it appears a strange convention, the entire lack of stage settings, yet with familiarity there is a sense of freedom and relief in an unencumbered stage.

Change of scene is effected by means of imaginative properties, symbols of real things. The property men carry in a small oblong platform, slightly raised above the stage. This may serve as a bridge, a throne, or a forge, as the action requires. Upon this platform are placed the buildings which suggest the scene. They are fashioned from bamboo and bound with cotton, and may have a roof of brocade or thatch, or be crowned with oak or willow branches, red maple leaves, or cherry blossoms. Thus a palace or a cottage, a hermitage, or an inn is furnished. When a boat, a well-head, or a palanquin is needed, no attempt is made to imitate the real article; merely the outline of the object serves the purpose.



WITH A KIMONO (ON GROUND) SYMBOLISING A SICK-BED:
THE SPIRIT OF JEALOUSY IN THE NO PLAY, "AOINOUE."

This No play has jealousy for its theme. The chief character, Aoinoue, is a woman who uses evil influence against another. Her rival falls ill, and her sick bed is represented on the stage by a folded kimono. The abstract Spirit of Jealousy appears, menacing the sufferer, but a priest drives her away by prayers. The clash between evil and good, characteristic of the No drama, is shown in spectacular action.



"TSUCHIGOMO" ("THE EARTH SPIDER"): THE MONSTER IN
HIS PAPER WEB, A SPECTACULAR FEATURE OF THE PLAY.

A warrior, mysteriously ill, is being poisoned by a monster spider, who visits him at dead of night in the guise of a priest. He attacks the monster, which escapes, pursued by his retainers. Property men bring on the spider's den, under a curtain, which is removed, revealing the spider within. It breaks through the web, fights with the soldiers, and is killed.



"KURAMA TENGU": A JAPANESE NO DANCE-DRAMA SOMEWHAT ANALOGOUS TO THE GREEK LEGEND OF CHIRON THE CENTAUR.

The Tengu is a strange creature of Japanese folklore, possessed of many magic qualities. In this play a youth named Yoshitsune meets a Tengu in the Kurama hills of Kyoto, and the uncanny creature teaches him the secrets of the soldier's art, and, by means of a dance, shows him how to attack and how to defend. Yoshitsune later becomes the hero of many military exploits. In Greek legend, it will be recalled, many heroes were similarly instructed by the Centaur Chiron.



"MAKE-BELIEVE" IN JAPANESE NO PLAYS: QUAIN SYMBOLISM OF STAGE "PROPERTIES."

PICTURES SUPPLIED BY ZOK KINCAID

(SEE HER ARTICLE ON PAGE 30.)



AN EXILED GENERAL AS A BLIND BEGGAR IN A HERMIT'S HUT: "KAGEKIYO."

Kagekiyo, a defeated general, was exiled to Kyushu, became a blind beggar, friendless and half starved, and dwelt in a hermit's hut. His daughter, adopted by rich friends, travels far to visit him, but at first he denies his identity. Discerning the truth, she returns and embraces him. They talk of old times, and Kagekiyo shows her, by acting and gesture, how he lost the battle. Then he bids her return, and they part in tears.



AN ARMOURER'S FORGE AND ANVIL CONVENTIONALLY THE SWORDSMITH ASSISTED BY

"Kokaji" is a No drama of mining and dancing. A Kyoto swordsmith, commanded by the Emperor to fashion a new blade, prays to the Fox-god of the Shrine of Fushimi. The god comes to help him, and together they forge



REPRESENTED AND HUNG WITH SHINTO SYMBOLS: THE FOX-GOD, IN "KOKAJI."

the weapon on the anvil to drum beats in the orchestra. The god then performs a lively dance. The platform representing the forge is hung with the straw fringe and cut paper of Shinto, symbols of purity to ward off evil.



A "PROPERTY" PALANQUIN, OUTLINED IN BAMBOO AND RED COTTON: A JOURNEY IN "YUYA."

Yuya is the favourite of a Kyoto noble, who refuses her permission to go home when her mother is ill, wishing to take Yuya on an excursion to Niyonnu. He orders a palanquin, and property men bring it in. It is a carriage in outline, of bamboo bound with red cotton. Yuya stands inside it while the chorus describes the scenery of her journey. At the picnic she composes a poem alluding to her mother, which so pleases the noble that he lets her go.



A STAGE "WELL" WITH TALL GRASS INDICATING AUTUMN AND NEGLECTED GARDENS: A SCENE IN "IZUTSU."

"Izutsu" ("The Well-head") is one of many No ghost plays. A travelling priest visits a dilapidated temple, where a ghostly woman appears and relates her unhappy love for Narihira, a famous courtier and poet; how they played by the well as children, and how he loved and rode away. The well spirit's expressive dance is the chief feature. Tall grass beside the well-head indicates autumn and the neglected temple grounds.



HOW A RUSTIC COTTAGE IS REPRESENTED IN THE NO A TRUANT FAVOURITE.

Kogo was a Court lady beloved by the Emperor, but, ill-treated by one above her in rank, she ran away to a cottage in the Kyoto hills. The Emperor, in grief, sent a messenger to search for her. Riding along one moonlight night



DRAMA: THE EMPEROR'S MESSENGER (LEFT) DISCOVERS A SCENE IN "KOGO."

he heard her harp, and gave her a letter from the Emperor that comforted her. The only stage "property" is the rustic gate and fence. Kogo and her handmaid sit within, while the messenger, horse-whip in hand, stands outside.



A STAGE "SHIP": AN ENSLAVED CHINESE MERCHANT, RELEASED, RETURNING WITH HIS SONS IN "TOSHI."

In "Toshi" (a place-name) the chief character is a rich Chinese merchant kidnapped by pirates and sold as a slave in Japan. Years later, his two sons arrive with a ransom. Meantime he has married a Japanese woman, and has two other sons, who wish to accompany him to China. His master at first refuses to let the Japanese sons go. The enslaved merchant is about to kill himself, when the master relents. Father and sons sail away happily together.

能
樂
百
番

A MASK "FLUSHED WITH WINE" IN A NO DANCE: "SHOJO"
(A MONKEY-LIKE CREATURE OF CHINESE ORIGIN).

"Shojo" is described as a No dance of congratulation. The character, which is of Chinese origin, is half-animal, half-human, and is considered to be especially fond of the cup that cheers. Accordingly the boyish mask is flushed with wine. The long red mane, with the costume of red-and-gold brocade, make a brilliant stage figure. The dance is expressive of the joy of life.

The love for the imaginative goes still farther in the No, and, when the simple properties can be done away with, the play relies entirely on an appeal to the imagination of the audience. The chorus chants of spring on the mountains and a mist of cherry-blossoms, and the players, as travellers, stand in two lines, facing each other, intoning a description of the scenery, which causes every detail of the landscape to be conjured up before the mind's eye. It is largely through mimesis that the unseen is brought vividly before the audience, not so much by words as by gestures, postures, or movements to create the necessary atmosphere.

Another principle of the stage of antiquity which is active in the No is the wearing of masks by the actors. The West is so unaccustomed to masks that their use is sometimes puzzling. It has been thought that the Greeks wore masks because they performed out-of-doors before a huge audience, and the changing expressions of the actors' faces could not be seen. But such a disguise is part and parcel of the realm of the unreal. In plays dealing with legendary heroes, gods, ghosts and demons, the mask is appropriate, since a real face would create disillusionment. Even in the plays of human nature, the No mask is worn, because of the complete concentration upon the single emotion of the play. Not all characters in the No plays are masked, as the assistant players are impersonal to a degree unknown to the West, and do not draw attention to themselves. Indeed, the mask contributes largely to the unity of the No, which is much more organic than Western opera. In the No all the theatre arts appear to collaborate and serve a purpose, the emphasis placed now on the singing, again on the acting. While the dance is the main interpretation, the chorus and drummers become observers like the audience. When the drummers and chorus are active, the actors may remain motionless.

Since stage-settings are lacking, the æsthetic use of colour is seen in the No costumes, emphasising the characters in a way which acting or dialogue is unable to do. The polished floor of the stage reflects the silver or gold, purples or oranges, of the robes worn by ghosts and warriors, and, as the plays are performed in the daylight, the fabrics are often touched by shafts of light which greatly enhance their beauty, for there is nothing garish about these sumptuous No costumes. An angel wears a loose over-robe of supple gold cloth, into which is woven a pattern of a phoenix with many drooping tail-feathers in rainbow hues that melt into the texture; gods are regal in gold brocades; young women are clad in crimsons; old age is clothed in dun browns and greys. Goddesses who dance are in bright red skirts and over-dresses of soft purple and gold. Ancient wizards, or other grotesque characters, make metallic figures in their ample robes with stiff lines, suggesting statues.

Of the two-hundred-and-fifty No plays which have been handed down and are performed to-day, the greater number deal with human nature. There is the familiar theme of filial piety, a virtue so prized in Asia, the love of a daughter for her mother, as in Yuya, who, as the mistress of a

Kyoto noble, was taken on a cherry-viewing excursion, and prevented from going to her mother, who was ill in the country. So deep is Yuya's affection for her mother that, in the midst of the festivity, she composes a poem expressing her feeling, and this so wins the admiration of the noble that she is given permission to depart, but first expresses her thankfulness in a dance. Again, it is the sacrifice of a servant for his master, the revenge of a woman upon the slayer of her husband, the love of a brother and sister of high degree fallen upon evil days, or the tragedy of the abbot of a Buddhist Temple in Kyoto exiled to a lonely island.

The mystic quality of the No plays is best shown in the divine No, or pieces having gods or goddesses as characters. These celestial beings are made known in human symbols, but carry the audience away to regions far removed from mundane affairs. Ghostly visitants to this world, spirits seeking their old haunts and pursuits, are also characteristic of the No plays, and their treatment is of unusual interest. These apparitions become visible to pious priests at midnight in lonely temples, when the candle-lights on the altar sputter and flicker in the breeze, but with the coming of dawn they disappear. Sometimes these ghosts are unhappy because of work unfinished in life, or harbour feelings of re-entment at the injustice of fate. Invariably they are consoled by the prayers of the living.

In almost all No plays the characters give expression to their emotions by means of a dance, and, when the drama element is not strong, the chief feature of a piece may be a dance. Short dances are generally chosen to end the No programmes, such as "Shojo," a strange creature from Chinese folklore, a species of baboon. The dance of the "Shojo" is the symbol of festivity and congratulation. The youthful mask is flushed with wine. The costume is a gay red-and-gold brocade, and the wig a long red mane which immediately conveys the impression that the character belongs to the half-human, half-animal world of the No. For the dancers may appear as ogres, foxes, or dragons, as dreamy ghosts, the spirits of mountains, iris flowers, willow-trees, or as the dancing mimes of warriors who describe how they fought on land or sea. Devil and demon plays in the No reveal the eternal clash of good and evil which has formed the material for drama throughout the ages, both in East and West, and in these the statuesque quality of the No is given full play, the stage being full of movement, the dancing and action of a lively nature.

About the base of the raised platform on which No plays are performed, there is a space set with pebbles, which are always neatly arranged and freshly washed. To the initiated they have not been placed there by accident, but signify the separation between the ideal and the real, the world of the audience and that of the imagination. The No belongs to the non-realistic stage, the sacred flame of which was lighted in Greece, India, and China, and its actors may yet become torch-bearers to rekindle the idealistic stage of the West.



A HEADDRESS TO REPRESENT A BIRD IN A NO DANCE: THE NAME CHARACTER IN "SAGI" ("THE HERON").

In this No dance, entitled "Sagi," the actor impersonates a heron, and, by means of gesture, miming, and dancing, endeavours to suggest the movements of a bird. The costume is of silver and white, the hair is white and long, and the headdress is decorated with a silver heron. Every detail of the performance is thus designed to carry out the idea of a bird.

Illustrations supplied by Zoe Kincaid. (See her Article on Page 30, and other Illustrations on Pages 31 to 33.)

THE UNSEEN WITNESS.—[Continued from page 22.]

"Well," she remarked, shutting her bag, "that's that. I've got to be getting on."

"And what about your fee?"

"Oh, that's to be paid into my bank in London when I get back."

He was regarding her curiously. "Pretty trusting, aren't you?"

"You have to take people on trust sometimes. . . ."

"I suppose you have," he agreed thoughtfully. She offered her hand. "Good-bye. I'm sorry about the taxi."

He held her hand for an instant in his. "Stay and dine with me. . . ."

"What, in a private room?"

"You have to take people on trust sometimes," he quoted. "It's

She laughed. "I believe I'd work for anybody who'd pay me. Money worries are the very devil. The shop would do all right if only these damned women would pay their bills."

He was pouring out the champagne. "Is Madame Hennau a client of yours?" he asked as he filled her glass.

"No. She's a friend of one of my customers. This woman told me that Madame Hennau, who was ill, had a frightfully important letter to send to Paris and that, if I'd take it, she'd pay my expenses and give me a hundred pounds. . . ."

"Rather a lot of money for a simple service, wasn't it?"

"That's why I jumped at it."

"And you'd no idea, of course, that Madame Hennau is an agent of the Ogpu, a Bolshevik spy?"



"The pistol he levelled had a sort of nickel sheath at the end of the barrel . . . he backed to the door, and groping, with his left hand behind him, shot the bolt. Then he came forward again, squat, menacing, his little eyes, his livid face, boding with evil."

a good dinner." He picked up the menu. "Blinis, river trout, and chicken cooked in some unpronounceable fashion which I make no doubt is delicious. And here, I fancy," he added, as the waiter appeared in the doorway with a tray, "are the blinis."

She was scanning the table. "You take a lot for granted, don't you?" she observed, looking at the two covers.

"Not where other people's taxis are concerned," he countered. He still held her hand, but she was straining away from him now. "Take off your overcoat and we'll eat."

She unfastened the belt. "It's fearfully improper," she said. "But those pancake things smell marvellous. And I'm simply ravenous."

He put her with her back to the door and took the place opposite, facing it. The waiter opened the champagne and withdrew.

"And how long," Clavering enquired casually, as they began to eat, "have you been working for the Ogpu?"

"For the which?"

"The Ogpu. Don't pretend you've never heard of the Ogpu?"

"They're the Bolsheviks who shoot and torture people, aren't they?"

"Correct. The Bolshevik Secret Service."

On that she put down her glass and stared at him, the colour draining out of her face. "You're joking," she said in an awed voice. She broke off, then suddenly pushed back her chair and stood up. "Then are you. . . ." she began.

He intercepted the question. "Madame Hennau sent you because she was too scared to go herself."

"But she's ill in bed. I saw her myself."

"Ill my foot! She's gone to earth because we. . . . because she knew she was being shadowed. What did you think this letter was, anyway?"

"She said it was to do with her business, a frock shop she's interested in. I naturally thought. . . ."

"What?"

She paused. "Well, there's a certain amount of smuggling in our business. . . ."

A smile crept into the man's face. "I see. Smuggling's different, of course. . . ."

"Well, the Government have got the income-tax, haven't they?"

Clavering laughed. "Well, sit down and get on with your dinner." He stood up and went round to her. As he moved his hand went out and rapped the partition.

"If you don't mind," said the girl, "I believe I'll go now. I don't want to dine with you after all. . . ."

"My dear," he answered suddenly grave, "I think you've spoken too late."

The door had opened. An angry man burst in. He was short and thick-set with a shaven head visible from under his black felt hat and small, dull eyes that seemed to swim in a face of greenish-yellowish lard.

"Imbecile!" he roared in French over his shoulder at the *maitre d'hôtel* who hovered in the background, "this is Salon Number Five, and here," he added, dancing round the table and snatching up the menu, "is the dinner I ordered. And you," he squealed, suddenly dropping into English, in a voice fluty with rage, "are Mees Galloway, are you not?"

"Yes," said the girl rather tremulously. The door had silently closed.

With a snort of fury the man rounded on Clavering. "Then who the devil are you? This room was reserved for me, in my name, the name of Peters. You come here, you take my name, you eat my dinner. . . ."

The girl's eyes were fixed on Clavering. He lounged forward and, as he did so, jostled her back against the partition. "Stay where you are," he whispered, "and don't move."

The man stood his ground, glaring. "Take your hat off, Bogrov," said Clavering placidly. "Don't you know your manners?" So saying, with a flick of the hand, he sent the other's hat flying.

The man recoiled a pace.

"Dunlop!" he gasped. His hand flashed inside his coat. The pistol he levelled had a sort of nickel sheath at the end of the barrel. "Raise your arms, both of you!" he snarled. "You know me, Dunlop. When I shoot, I do not miss." He laughed. "Plenty of practice where I come from. One move from either of you. . . ." As he spoke, with incredible agility for one of his build, he backed to the door, and, groping, with his left hand behind him, shot the bolt. Then he came forward again, squat, menacing, his little eyes, his livid face, bodent with evil.

"And now," he rasped, "I take that letter, Dunlop, the letter the girl brought. . . ."

"There was no letter," the girl cried desperately. "It—it wasn't ready. I was going to explain."

"So?" he said softly. "Then explain this. One of my men in London was shadowing an English Intelligence agent called Clavering. Clavering travelled to Paris by air this afternoon. My man reached Croydon too late, so he engaged an aeroplane to follow. He telephones me just now that the air-liner came down on the French coast, and that while he was making enquiries you and this English agent went off in the other plane." He broke off. "So? I should know. Of course, it is my good friend, Dunlop who is also Clavering, is it not so?"

"Correct," said Clavering drily.

"The letter!" the Russian exclaimed. "This pistol has a silencer, Dunlop. Where is the letter?"

Clavering shrugged his shoulders. "On the table, under my napkin. . . ."

The girl moved uneasily. There was indignation in the glance she gave him. Snatching up the napkin, Bogrov had pounced upon the envelope. He thrust it in his pocket and began to back towards the door, his pistol levelled, his eyes triumphant. "Good-night to you, Mr. Dunlop Clavering," he chortled. His hand thrust behind him unbolted the door. "Admit that I am generous. I leave you my dinner. And the lady." He was gone.

Furiously, the girl turned to Clavering. He had taken down his hands and was stretching himself languidly. "Can't you stop him? Do you really mean to let him get away with it?"

But a voice from the door interrupted her. A stolid-looking, flaxen-haired individual stood on the threshold. He had a black leather case slung across him on a strap. "Is it all right to let him go, *mon capitaine*?" he said to Clavering.

"Quite, if you're satisfied, Dupont. Everything in order?"

"Absolutely, *mon capitaine*. The proofs will be ready in an hour." He raised his hand and signalled along the corridor.

Clavering turned to the girl. "Miss Galloway," he said, "allow me to introduce Inspector Dupont, of the Photographic Department of the *Sûreté Générale*—the French Scotland Yard, you know."

"A detective?" she exclaimed. "And yet you let this Russian spy escape?"

Clavering yawned. "Show her, Dupont!"

The Inspector disappeared, and an instant after the girl heard a faint sound above her head. Looking round she saw that a panel in the wall had opened. The detective's rosy face was framed in the aperture. It withdrew, and his hand appeared clutching a sort of elongated black box. The aperture vanished. To all intents and purposes the surface of the wall, painted with a mass of foliage, was unbroken.

"All right, Inspector," Clavering called out. The square hole reappeared in the wall and the panel was slid back into position.

"It's a special camera," Clavering explained. "From the moment he walked into the room Bogrov was in front of the objective. We know all about Madame Hennau; we've been trailing her for months, and that report of hers is a fake, doctored stuff. What we could never find out was to whom she was sending her reports. We happened to get on to this rendezvous, and as I've spent some considerable time in Soviet Russia, I was sent over to see

if I could recognise the party in question. Lo and behold! it's my old pal Bogrov, a peculiarly dirty piece of work."

"What a horrible creature!" said the girl with a shudder. "But I don't see why you shouldn't have arrested him."

"We've resumed diplomatic relations with the Soviets," Clavering answered with a shrug. "But if we can't prevent Bolshevik espionage, at least we can have a shot at knowing just which are OGPU agents among their horde of diplomatists and trade officials, here in France and at home. Bogrov's number's up all right. His usefulness as a spy is ended, now that he's known. He may as well return to Russia." He chuckled. "The OGPU is apt to be harsh with failures. And now, I think, we can go on with our dinner."

IV.

Réveillon was warming up. The thud of a jazz band mounted from the restaurant, and laughter and the sound of voices rang along the corridor. Coffee had just been served in Salon Number Five.

"There's one thing you haven't explained," said the girl. "How did you know my name?"

"Rang up the offices of the air line when I got to Paris."

"Why did you do that?"

"I suppose I wanted to know who'd had the nerve to pinch my taxi. Are you married?"

She shook her head.

"Any plans to the contrary?"

"No—o."

"Then may I ask who was the ruffian whom you suffered to foist his loathsome attentions upon you at Croydon?"

She laughed. "Oh, that was Guy. He wants to marry me. But he has red hair. I don't like red hair."

"You ought to have red hair yourself. All the really dangerous woman spies have red hair, haven't they?"

"You ought to know. You're in the Secret Service, aren't you?"

He made a grimace. "Don't let's be melodramatic, shall we?"

"Well, you seem to have two names, haven't you? Which is the real one?"

"I use them so indiscriminately that I never can remember. Which do you prefer?"

She paused to consider. "I think Clavering is rather a nice name. . . ."

"I might hold you to that opinion one day," he observed thoughtfully. "Something has got to be done about that shop of yours, hasn't it?"

THE END.



"... the girl heard a faint sound above her head. Looking round, she saw that a panel in the wall had opened. The detective's rosy face was framed in the aperture."



THE COTILLON

By L. P. HARTLEY.

Illustrated by STEVEN SPURRIER, R.O.I.

BUT," protested Marion Lane, "you don't mean that we've all got to dance the cotillon in masks? Won't that be terribly hot?"

"My dear," Jane Manning, her friend and hostess, reminded her, "this is December, not July. Look!" She pointed to the window that protected them against a soft bombardment of snow-flakes.

Marion moved across from the fireplace where they were sitting, and looked out. The seasonable snow had just begun to fall, as though in confirmation of Mrs. Manning's words. Here and there the gravel still showed black under its powdery coating, and on the wing of the house which faced east, the shiny foliage of the magnolia, pitted with pockets of snow, seemed nearly black too. The trees of the park, which yesterday, when Marion arrived, were so distinct against the afternoon sky that you could see their twigs, were almost invisible now, agitated shapes dim in the slanting snow. She turned back to the room.

"I think the cotillon's a good idea, and I don't want to make difficulties," she said. "I'm not an obstructionist by nature, am I? Tell me if I am."

"My dear, of course you're not."

"Well, I was thinking, wouldn't half the fun of the thing be gone if you didn't know who was who? I mean, in those figures when the women powder the men's faces, and rub their reflections off the looking-glass, and so on. There doesn't seem much point in powdering a mask."

"My darling Marion, the mask's only a bit of black silk that covers the top part of one's face; you don't imagine we shan't recognise each other?"

"You may," said Marion. "I find it difficult to recognise the largest, barest face. I often cut my best friends in the street. They needn't put on a disguise for me not to know them."

"But you can tell them by their voices."

"Supposing they won't speak?"

"Then you must ask them questions."

"But I shan't know half the people here."

"You'll know all of us in the house," her friend said; "that's sixteen to start with. And you know the Grays and the Fosters and the Boltens. We shall only be about eighty, if as many."

"Counting gate-crashers?"

"There won't be any."

"But how will you be able to tell, if they wear masks?"

"I shall know the exact numbers, for one thing; and, for another, at midnight, when the cotillon stops, everyone can take their masks off. Must, in fact."

"I see." The room was suddenly filled with light. A servant had come in to draw the curtains. They sat in silence until he had finished the last of the windows; there were five of them in a row.

"I had forgotten how long this room was," said Marion. "You'll have the cotillon here, I suppose?"

"It's the only possible place. I wish it was a little longer, then we could have a cushion race. But I'm afraid we shall have to forgo that. It would be over as soon as it began."

The servant arranged the tea-table in front of them and went away.

"Darling," said Jane suddenly, "before Jack comes in from shooting with his tired but noisy friends, I want to say what a joy it is to have you here. I'm glad the others aren't coming till Christmas Eve. You'll have time to tell me all about yourself."

"Myself?" repeated Marion. She stirred in her chair. "There's nothing to tell."

"Dearest, I can't believe it! There must be, after all these months. My life is dull, you know—no, not dull, quiet. And yours is always so *mouvementée*."

"It used to be," admitted Marion. "It used to be; but now I—"

There was a sound of footsteps and laughter at the door, and a voice cried: "Jenny, Jenny, have you some tea for us?"

"You shall have it in a moment," Mrs. Manning called back. Sighing, she turned to her friend.

"We must postpone our little séance."

Five days had gone by—it was the evening of the 27th, the night of the ball. Marion went up to her room to rest. Dinner was at half-past eight, so she had nearly two hours' respite. She lay down on the bed and turned out all the lights except the one near her head. She felt very tired. She had talked so much during the past few days that even her thoughts had become inarticulate; they would not stay in her mind, they rose automatically to her lips, or it seemed to her that they did. "I am glad I did not tell Jenny," she soliloquised. "It would only have made her think worse of me, and done no good."

What a wretched business!" She extinguished the light, but the gramophone within her went on more persistently than ever. It was a familiar record, she knew every word of it; it might have been called "The Witness for the Defence." "He had no reason to take me so seriously," announced the machine, in self-excusatory accents. "I only wanted to amuse him. It was Hugh Travers who introduced us; he knows what I am like; he must have told Jimmy; men always talk these things over among themselves. Hugh had a grievance against me too, once, but he got over it; I have never known a man who didn't." For a moment Marion's thoughts broke free from their bondage to the turning wheel, and hovered over her past life. Yes, more or less, they had all got over it. "I never made him any promise," pursued the record, inexorably taking up its tale. "What right had he to think he could coerce me? Hugh ought not to have let us meet, knowing the kind of man he was—and—and the kind of woman I was. I was very fond of him, of course; but he would have been so exacting; he was so exacting. All the same," continued the record—sliding a moment into the major key, only to relapse into the minor—"left to myself I could have managed it all right, as I always have. It was pure bad luck that he found me that night with the other Jimmy. That was a dreadful affair!" At this point the record, as always, wobbled and scratched; Marion had to improvise something less painful to bridge over the gap. Her thoughts flew to the other Jimmy and dwelt on him tenderly; he would never have made a scene if he could have helped it; he had been so sweet to her afterwards. "It was just bad luck," the record resumed; "I didn't want to blast his happiness and wreck his life, or whatever he says I did."

What had he actually said?

There was an ominous movement in Marion's mind. The mechanism was being wound up, was going through the whole dreary performance again! Anything rather than that! She turned on the light, jumped off the bed, and searched among her letters. The moment she had it in her hand, she realised that she knew it by heart.

DEAR MARION,

After what has happened, I don't suppose you will want to see me again, and though I want to see you, I think it better for us both that I shouldn't. I know it sounds melodramatic to say it, but you have spoilt my life, you have killed something inside me. I never much valued Truth for its own sake, and I am not grateful to chance for affording me that peep behind the scenes last night; I am more grateful to you for keeping up the disguise as long as you did. But, though you have taken away so much, you have left me one flicker of curiosity; before I die (or after, it doesn't much matter!) I should like to see you (forgive the expression) unmasked, so that for a moment I can compare the reality with the illusion I used to cherish. Perhaps I shall. Meanwhile, good-bye.

Yours once, and still in a sense yours, JAMES CHICHESTER.

Marion's eyes slid from the letter to the chair beside her, where lay mask and domino, ready to put on. She did not feel the irony of their presence; she did not think about them; she was experiencing an immense relief—a relief that always came after reading Jimmy's letter. When she thought about it it appalled her; when she read it it seemed much less hostile, flattering almost; a testimonial from a wounded and disappointed, but still adoring, man. She lay down again, and in a moment was asleep.

Soon after ten o'clock the gentlemen followed the ladies into the long drawing-room; it looked unfamiliar even to Jack Manning, stripped of furniture except for a thin lining of gilt chairs. So far everything had gone off splendidly; dinner, augmented by the presence of half-a-dozen neighbours, had been a great success; but now everyone, including the host and hostess, was a little uncertain what to do next. The zero hour was approaching; the cotillon was supposed to start at eleven and go on till twelve, when the serious dancing would begin; but guests motoring from a distance might arrive at any time. It would spoil the fun of the thing to let the masked and the unmasked meet before the cotillon began; but how could they be prevented? To preserve the illusion of secrecy, Mrs. Manning had asked them to announce themselves at the head of the staircase, in tones sufficiently discreet to be heard by her alone. Knowing how fallible are human plans, she had left in the cloak-room a small supply of masks for those men who, she knew, would forget to bring them. She thought her

arrangements were proof against mischance, but she was by no means sure; and, as she looked about the room and saw the members of the dinner-party stealing furtive glances at the clock, or plunging into frantic and short-lived conversations, she began to share their uneasiness.

"I think," she said, after one or two unsuccessful efforts to gain the ear of the company, "I think you had all better go and disguise yourselves, before anyone comes and finds you in your natural state." The guests tittered nervously at this pleasantry, then, with signs of relief upon their faces, they began to file out, some by one door, some by the other, according as the direction of their own rooms took them. The long gallery (as it was sometimes magniloquently described) stood empty and expectant.

"There," breathed Mrs. Manning. "Would you have recognised that parlour bandit as Sir Joseph Dickinson?"

"No," said her husband. "I wouldn't have believed a mask and a domino could make such a difference. Except for a few of the men, I hardly recognised anyone."

"You're like Marion; she told me she often cuts her best friends in the street."

"I dare say that's a gift she's grateful for."

"Jack! You really mustn't. Didn't she look lovely to-night? What a pity she has to wear a mask, even for an hour!" Her husband grunted.

"I told Colin Chillingworth she was to be here; you know he's always wanted to see her. He is such a nice man, so considerate—the manners of the older generation."

"Why, because he wants to see Marion?"

"No, idiot! But he had asked me if he might bring a guest—"

"Who?"

"I don't remember the man's name, but he has a bilious attack or something, and can't come, and Colin apologised profusely for not letting us know; his telephone is out of order, he said."

"Very civil of him. How many are we then, all told?"

"Seventy-eight; we should have been seventy-nine."

"Anyone else to come?"

"I'll just ask Jackson."

The butler was standing half-way down the stairs.

He confirmed Mrs. Manning's estimate. "That's right, Madam; there were twenty-two at dinner, and fifty-six have come in since."

"Good staff-work," said her husband. "Now we must dash off and put on our little masks." They were hurrying away when Mrs. Manning called over her shoulder: "You'll see that the fires are kept up, Jackson?"

"Oh, yes, Madam," he replied. "It's very warm in there."

It was. Marion, coming into the ball-room about eleven o'clock, was met by a wave of heat, comforting and sustaining. She moved about among the throng, slightly dazed, it is true, but self-confident and elated. As she expected, she could not put a name to many of the people who kept crossing her restricted line of vision, but she was intensely aware of their eyes—dark, watchful, but otherwise expressionless eyes, framed in black. She welcomed their direct regard. On all sides she heard conversation and laughter, especially laughter; little trills and screams of delight at identities disclosed; voices expressing bewilderment and polite despair—"I'm very stupid, I really cannot imagine who you are"—gruff rumbling voices and high falsetto squeaks, obviously disguised. Marion found herself a little impatient of this childishness. When people recognised her, as they often did (her mask was as much a decoration as a concealment), she smiled with her lips, but did not try to identify them in return. She felt faintly scornful of the women who were only interesting provided you did not know who they were and could not see their faces. She looked forward to the moment when the real business of the evening would begin.

But now the band in the alcove between the two doors had struck up, and a touch on her arm warned her that she was wanted for a figure. Her partner was a raw youth, nice enough in his way, eager, good-natured, and jaunty, like a terrier dog. He was not a type she cared for, and she longed to give him the slip.

The opportunity came. Standing on a chair, rather like the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbour, she held aloft a lighted candle.

[Continued on page 43.]



"Marion moved across from the fireplace. . . . The seasonable snow had just begun to fall."



"THE GAMING ROOM."

"... the atmosphere of a world in which men drank deep and played high, led by a brown-wigged roué, whose chosen associates were bruisers and opera-singers . . ."

Reproduced from the Original Watercolour by Thomas Rowlandson; by Courtesy of the Owner, Captain Desmond Coke.

ROWLANDSON AND HIS ENGLAND

By DOROTHY MARGARET STUART.

Illustrated with reproductions of famous watercolours by THOMAS ROWLANDSON.



WERE human beings ever so willowy, so gracile, so wistful-eyed, as the gods and nymphs of Botticelli? Were they ever so heavy, so swinish, so cynical, as the men and women of Rowlandson's caricatures? There was probably in the Florence of the Medici as much sinister wrongdoing, as much stark crime, as in the London of the Prince Regent; and in the London of the Prince Regent there was probably more simple goodness and more earnest virtue than in the Florence of the Medici. Botticelli raised his contemporaries to the level of the lesser gods; Rowlandson degraded his to the level of the lower brutes. Midway between those levels the truth lay, touching both.

Rowlandson, a Londoner who had learnt his craft in Paris, was the least subtle of caricaturists. There was, indeed, nothing subtle about the Regency atmosphere. It was above all things raffish, the atmosphere of a world in which men drank deep and played high, led by a brown-wigged roué whose chosen associates were bruisers and opera-singers, and

whence the more sober and sedate figures withdrew themselves to chintz-hung parlours where no caricaturist tried to follow them. In that world you meet few young women and few young men; and those whom you do meet there have not the allure of youth.

It has been pointed out that in the novels of Miss Austen children seem oddly out of place, and nobody keeps a dog. Even more queerly out of place seem the children in Rowlandson's England, and the dogs he draws might have been whelped in the same litter with Cerberus. The teeming midgits of the Breedwell family suggest the nightmare of a child-hating bachelor; they are no more children than their monstrous pet is a dog.

When we feel a little out of tune with our own age, when we hastily condemn it as superficial, or decadent, or grotesque, it is good for our souls to step back into the England which Rowlandson saw—or thought that he saw. That it did not exist exactly as he saw it is no argument against its essential reality. Mr. Gladstone did not exist



"THE BREEDWELL FAMILY."

"... the teeming midgits of the Breedwell family suggest the nightmare of a child-hating bachelor; they are no more children than their monstrous pet is a dog."

Reproduced from the Original Watercolour by Thomas Rowlandson; by Courtesy of the Owner, Captain Desmond Coke.

exactly as Tenniel saw him, nor is there beneath the visiting moon any such creature as the J. H. Thomas of Low. Yet that Satanic old Scotsman with the impossible collar-peaks, that too-genial Welshman in the too-sleek dress-suit, have an objective existence never achieved by



"SKATING ON THE SERPENTINE."

"They went skating on the Serpentine, now the murmurous haunt of the proletariat on summer eves."

Reproduced from the Original Watercolour by Thomas Rowlandson; by Courtesy of the Owner, Captain Bruce S. Ingram

mere men of flesh and blood. In the same way, Rowlandson's England was, and is, a real country, peopled by breathing creatures whose breath is not the breath of life.

A real country—yes, but we are glad that we ourselves do not live in the same dimension. These ventripotent Englishmen no doubt believed that they were having a good time, "with their guzzlings and their muzzlings," as Mrs. Macstinger might have put it. They dined, they patronised the cockpit and the prize ring; they went skating on the Serpentine, now the murmurous haunt of the proletariat on summer eves; they ate, drank, and were as merry as they knew how to be at Eel Pie Island, and bandied strong-flavoured anecdotes in the coffee-houses of Bath. Yet there is an indefinable dreariness about it all, a sense of lassitude roughly varied with violent exertion, a reek of sawdust and heel-taps, a fume of coarse candles guttering down.

Was this the England that met and countered the menace of Napoleon, the England of Pitt the Younger, of Wellington and Nelson, Picton and Collingwood? In a very real sense it was. This crude zest, this cynical materialism, this top-booted arrogance, helped to stiffen the national fibre when the supreme testing-time came. Those deep quaffers had a fellow-toper in the ascetic William Pitt; those gamesters, lounging unbuttoned round the faro-tables, had a fellow-gambler in the generous-minded Charles James Fox. Those red-cheeked, guffawing Cockneys, who streamed to Epsom in "coach, carriage, wheel-barrow, donkey-cart," formed the inchoate mass whence were drawn the man who shouldered his Brown Bess in the Peninsula, and he who, naked to the waist, fed the guns at Trafalgar.



"COFFEE-HOUSE AT BATH."

"They . . . bandied strong-flavoured anecdotes in the coffee-houses of Bath."

Reproduced from the Original Watercolour by Thomas Rowlandson; by Courtesy of the Owner, Captain Desmond Cole

It is more difficult to think of the Regency as the age of the Romantic Revival and the Lake Poets, of grave Mr. Wordsworth, the Great Unknown, and that delightful, if demoniac, young man, my Lord Byron. Yet here again there is a strange consonance between the landscape and the figures dispersed about it. The

Romantic Revival and the Lake School, the gravity of Mr. Wordsworth, the greatness of the Unknown, even the demoniac charm of my Lord Byron, were all in their several ways revolts against the temper of the Regency and reactions from it, and they were all shaped and coloured by the influences which they set out to overcome. The Lake Poets looked to the basic austerity of Nature to counteract the coarse opulence prevailing in fashion and in art; the Romantics invoked a distorted, misapprehended, but most sumptuously appalled past to redress the balance of a present at once strenuous and dull. Byron also flung into the scale certain Levantine stage-properties, muskets with damascened butts, scimitars, turbans, sequin-bordered veils, sharply differentiated from the duelling pistols, the court swords, the cocked hats and paduasoy tippets of the more sophisticated West.

If the ghosts of Charles II. and his friends revisit St. James's Park they probably time their return for some night when the Regency spooks are otherwise engaged. Some such system of rotation must surely be observed among those whose privilege—or whose penalty—it is to walk with printless feet upon the moonlit turf. Plantagenet visitants would soon find themselves involved in altercations with Elizabethans; Cromwellians would brawl with Carolines; and the Restoration phantoms, whose raffishness while yet they lived had a grace, a gaiety, a *panache* quite unlike the heavy indecorum of the Georges, would gather up their full-skirted coats, ram their narrow-brimmed hats hard upon their periwigged heads, and take to their scarlet heels, if they found themselves in any such company as that which Rowlandson has sketched, sauntering and swaggering at the eastern extremity of the Mall.

True, the trees are as pleasant as they were when Mr. Secretary Pepys walked that way, and stole a handful of apples, and hid them in his sleeve, though, as a profane and prosaic nobleman once pointed out,



"EEL PIE ISLAND."

"They ate, drank, and were as merry as they knew how to be at Eel Pie Island."

Reproduced from the Original Watercolour by Thomas Rowlandson; by Courtesy of the Owner, Captain Desmond Cole.

"One damned tree is just like another damned tree." The little house to the north, near the spot where the mechanical *jet d'eau* at Spring Gardens had been wont to fling its sudden cascades into the air, is a delectable little house, meet to shelter Elizabeth Bennett or Evelina. The prospect pleases; undeniably the prospect pleases. But man is vile; undeniably man is vile.

In the eighteenth century Regents seem to have been peculiarly prone to err. George of Wales had anything but an edifying example in the record of Philippe of Orléans, who, when the century was young and Louis XV. younger still, had made the French Court what it had never been before, vulgar as well as dissolute. The absence of a Queen Consort was, in both the French instance and the English, a regrettable factor. It may be doubted whether the presence of the preposterous Caroline at her husband's side would have added any elegance to *his* Court. Even Mrs. Fitzherbert, who was a lady, and whom he loved, could not make even the last gentleman in England of him whom his flatterers acclaimed as the first in Europe. But the lack of any recognised and regularised feminine influence was constantly felt at Carlton House and at the Royal Pavilion.

As for Caroline herself, she might have stepped straight out of any one of these Regency caricatures. A dozen Sir Matthew Woods straddle among the thick-legged citizens who disport themselves ponderously there; a dozen Bergamis leer and slink behind them; the unruly infants whom the Princess nourished in her house probably bore a strong resemblance to the equally unruly young Breedwells; and there is hardly an over-dressed, over-fed, middle-aged woman in the whole procession who might not pass for a portrait of that ill-guided Princess for love of whom a London mob hurled bitter epithets at their one-time idol and hero, Arthur, first Duke of Wellington, K.G.



"THE ROAD TO EPSOM."

"Those red-checked, guffawing Cockneys, who streamed to Epsom in 'coach, carriage, wheel-barrow, donkey-cart,' formed the inchoate mass whence were drawn the man who shouldered his Brown Bess in the Peninsula, and he who, naked to the waist, fed the guns at Trafalgar."



"THE END OF THE MALL (SPRING GARDENS)."

"The little house, near the spot where the mechanical jet d'eau at Spring Gardens had been wont to fling its sudden cascades into the air, is a delectable little house, meet to shelter Elizabeth Bennett or Evelina."

Reproduced from the Original Watercolours by Thomas Rowlandson, by Courtesy of the Owner, Captain Desmond Cole.



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**CADBURY'S
'CUP'
CHOCOLATE**

Made at Bournville, the Factory in a Garden

THE COTILLON—[Continued from page 38.]

Below her seethed a small group of masked males, leaping like salmon, for the first to blow the candle out would have the privilege of dancing with the torch-bearer. Among them was her partner; he jumped higher than the rest, as she feared he would; but each time she saw his triton-like mouth soaring up she forestalled his agility and moved the candle out of his reach. Her arm began to tire; and the pack, foiled so often, began to relax their efforts. She must do something quickly. Espying her host among the competitors, she shamelessly brought the candle down to the level of his mouth.

"Nice of you," he said, when, having danced a few turns, they were sitting side by side. "I was glad of that bit of exercise."

"Why, do you feel cold?"

"A little. Don't you?" Marion considered. "Perhaps I do."

"Funny thing," said her host. "Fires seem to be blazing away all right, and it was too hot ten minutes ago."

"And how many ought there to be?"

"Seventy-eight."

"That's a rum go," said Manning. "We can't both be mistaken. I suppose someone came in afterwards. When I get a chance I'll talk to Jackson."

"It can't be a burglar," said Marion; "a burglar wouldn't have chosen that way of getting in."

"Besides, we should have seen him. No; a hundred to one it was just somebody who was feeling the heat and needed air. I don't blame them, but they needn't have blown us away. Anyhow, if there is a stranger among us he'll soon have to show up, for in half an hour's time we can take off these confounded masks. I wouldn't say it of everyone, but I like you better without yours."

"Do you?" smiled Marion.

"Meanwhile, we must do something about these favours. The



"As she spoke, a gust of wind blew the heavy curtains inwards, and a drift of snow came after them."

Their eyes travelled enquiringly round the room. "Why," exclaimed Manning, "no wonder we're cold; there's a window open!" As she spoke, a gust of wind blew the heavy curtains inwards, and a drift of snow came after them.

"Excuse me a moment," he said. "I'll soon stop that."

She heard the sash slam, and in a few moments he was back at her side. "Now, who on earth can have done it?" he demanded, still gasping from contact with the cold air. "The window was wide open."

"Wide enough to let anyone in?"

"Quite." There was a pause.

"How many of us ought there to be?" asked Marion. "I'm sure you don't know."

"I do—there are—"

"Don't tell me; let's count. I'll race you."

They were both so absorbed in their calculations that the leaders of the cotillon, coming round armed with favours for the next figure, dropped into their laps a fan and a pocket-book and passed on unnoticed.

"Well, what do you make it?" they cried almost in unison.

"Seventy-nine," said Marion. "And you."

"Seventy-nine too."

next figure's beginning. I say, a fur rug would be more suitable, but may I give this fan to you?"

"And will you accept this useful pocket-book?"

They smiled, and began to dance. Ten minutes passed, the fires were heaped up, but the rubbing of hands and hunching of shoulders which had followed the inrush of cold air did not cease. Marion, awaiting her turn to hold the looking-glass, shivered slightly. She watched her predecessor on the chair. Armed with a handkerchief, she was gazing intently into the mirror while, each in his turn, the men stole up behind her, filling the glass with their successive reflections; one after another she rubbed the images out. Marion was wondering idly whether she would wait too long and find the candidates exhausted when she jumped up from her chair, handed the looking-glass to the leader of the cotillon, and moved away with the man of her choice. Marion took the mirror and sat down. A feeling of unreality oppressed her. How was she to choose between these grotesque faces? One after another they loomed up, dream-like, in the glass, their intense, almost hypnotic eyes searching hers. She could not tell whether they were smiling, they gave so little indication of expression. She remembered how the other women had paused, peered into the glass, and seemed to consider; rubbing away this one at sight, with affected horror; lingering over that one as though sorely tempted, only crasing

him after a show of reluctance. She had fancied that some of the men looked piqued when they were rejected; they walked off with a slight stiffening of the neck and squaring of the shoulders; others had seemed frankly pleased to be chosen. She was not indifferent to the mimic drama of the figure, but she couldn't contribute to it. The chill she still felt numbed her mind and made it drowsy; her gestures seemed

Marion's eyes hovered round the room without catching sight of her late partner. "He doesn't seem to be here."

"Perhaps he's our uninvited guest," said Jane laughing. "Jack told me there was an extra person who couldn't be accounted for. Now, darling, you mustn't miss this figure; it's the most amusing of them all. After that, there's some favours to be given, and then supper. I long for it."

"But don't we take off our masks first?"

"Yes, of course. I'd forgotten that."

The figure described by Mrs. Manning as being the most amusing of all would have been much more amusing, Marion thought, if they had played it without masks. If the dancers did not recognise each other, it lost a great deal of its point. Its success depended on surprise. A space had been cleared in the middle of the room, an oblong space like a badminton court, divided into two, not by a net, but by a large white sheet supported at either end by the leaders of the cotillon, and held nearly at arm's length above their heads. On one side were grouped the men, on the other the women, theoretically invisible to each other; but Marion noticed that they moved about and took furtive peeps at each other round the sides, a form of cheating which, in the interludes, the leaders tried to forestall by rushing the sheet across to intercept the view. But most of the time these piratical glimpses went on unchecked, to the accompaniment of a good deal of laughter; for while the figure was in progress the leaders were perforce stationary. One by one the men came up from behind and clasped the hem of the sheet, so that their gloved fingers, and nothing else, were visible on the farther side. With becoming hesitation a woman would advance and take these anonymous fingers in her own; then the sheet was suddenly lowered—the dancers stood face to face, or, rather, mask to mask. Sometimes there were cries of recognition, sometimes silence; the masks were as impenetrable as the sheet had been.

It was Marion's turn. As she walked forward she saw that the gloved hands were not resting on the sheet like the rest; they were clutching it so tightly that the linen was caught up in creases between the fingers and crumpled round their tips. For a moment they did not respond to her touch; then they gripped with surprising force. Down went the leaders' arms, down went the corners of the sheet. But Marion's unknown partner did not take his cue. He forgot to release the sheet, and she remained with her arms held immovably aloft, the sheet falling in folds about her and almost covering her head. "An unrehearsed effect; jolly good, I call it," said somebody. At last, in response to playful tugs and twitches from the leaders, the man let the sheet go and discovered himself to the humiliated Marion. It was her partner of the previous figure, that uncommunicative man. His hands, that still held hers, felt cold through their kid covering.

"Oh," she cried, "I can't understand it—I feel so cold. Let's dance."

They danced for a little and then sat down. Marion felt chillier than ever, and she heard her neighbours on either side complaining too. Suddenly she made a decision and rose to her feet.

"Do take me somewhere where it's warmer," she said. "I'm perished here."

The man led the way out of the ball-room, through the ante-room at the end, where one or two couples were sitting, across the corridor into a little room where a good fire was burning, throwing every now and then a ruddy gleam on china ornaments and silver photograph-frames. It was Mrs. Manning's sitting-room.

"We don't need a light, do we?" said her companion. "Let's sit as we are."

It was the first time he had volunteered a remark. His voice was somehow familiar to Marion, yet she couldn't place it; it had an alien quality that made it unrecognisable, like one's own dress worn by someone else.

"With pleasure," she said. "But we mustn't stay long, must we? It's only a few minutes to twelve. Can we hear the music from here?"

They sat in silence, listening. There was no sound.

"Don't think me fussy," Marion said. "I'm enjoying this tremendously, but Jimmy would be disappointed if we missed the last figure. If you didn't mind opening the door, we should hear the music begin."

As he did not offer to move, she got up to open it herself, but before she reached the door she heard her name called. "Marion!"

"Who said that—you?" she cried, suddenly very nervous.

"Don't you know who I am?"

"Jim!" Her voice shook, and she sank back into her chair, trembling violently.

"How was it I didn't recognise you? I'm—I'm so glad to see you."

"You haven't seen me yet," said he. It was like him to say that, playfully grim. His words reassured her, but his tone left her still



"The onlookers saw her pause; the hand with the handkerchief lay motionless in her lap, her eyes were fixed upon the mirror."

automatic, outside the control of her will. Mechanically she rubbed away the reflection of the first candidate, of the second, of the third. But when the fourth presented himself, and hung over her chair till his mask was within a few inches of her hair, the onlookers saw her pause; the hand with the handkerchief lay motionless in her lap, her eyes were fixed upon the mirror. So she sat for a full minute, while the man at the back, never shifting his position, drooped over her like an ear-ring.

"She's taking a good look this time," said a bystander at last, and the remark seemed to pierce her reverie—she turned round slowly and then gave a tremendous start; she was on her feet in a moment. "I'm so sorry," someone heard her say as she gave the man her hand, "I never saw you. I had no idea there was anyone there."

A few minutes later Jane Manning, who had taken as much share in the proceedings as a hostess can, felt a touch upon her arm. It was Marion.

"Well, my dear," she said, "are you enjoying yourself?"

Marion's voice shook a little. "Marvellously." She added in an amused tone:

"Queer fellow I got hold of just now."

"Queer-looking, do you mean?"

"Really, I don't know; he was wearing a sort of death-mask that covered him completely, and he was made up as well, I thought, with French chalk."

"What else was queer about him?"

"He didn't talk. I couldn't get a word out of him."

"Perhaps he was deaf."

"That occurred to me. But he heard the music all right, he danced beautifully."

"Show him to me."

in doubt. She did not know how to start the conversation, what effect to aim at, what note to strike; so much depended on divining his mood and playing up to it. If she could have seen his face, if she could even have caught a glimpse of the poise of his head, it would have given her a cue; in the dark like this, hardly certain of his whereabouts in the room, she felt hopelessly at a disadvantage.

"It was nice of you to come and see me—if you did come to see me," she ventured at last.

"I heard you were to be here." Again that non-committal tone! Trying to probe him, she said:

"Would you have come otherwise? It's rather a childish entertainment, isn't it?"

"I should have come," he answered; "but it would have been in—in a different spirit."

She could make nothing of this.

"I didn't know the Mannings were friends of yours," she pursued. "He's rather a dear, married to a dull woman, if I must be really truthful."

"I don't know them," said he.

"Then you gate-crashed?"

"I suppose I did."

"I take that as a compliment," said Marion, after a pause. "But—forgive me—I must be very slow—I don't understand. You said you were coming in any case."

"Some friends of mine called Chillingworth offered to bring me."

"How lucky I was! So you came with them?"

"Not with them, after them."

"How odd; wasn't there room for you in their car? How did you get here so quickly?"

"The dead travel fast." His irony baffled her. But her thoughts flew to his letter, in which he accused her of having killed something in him; he must be referring to that.

"Darling Jim," she said. "Believe me, I'm sorry to have hurt you. What can I do to—to—"

There was a sound of voices calling, and her attention, thus awakened, caught the strains of music, muffled and remote.

"They want us for the next figure. We must go," she cried, thankful that the difficult interview was nearly over. She was colder than ever, and could hardly keep her teeth from chattering audibly.

"What is the next figure?" he asked, without appearing to move.

"Oh, you know—we've had it before—we give each other favours, then we dance, then we unmask ourselves. Jim, we really ought to go! Listen! Isn't that midnight beginning to strike?"

Unable to control her agitation—aggravated by the strain of the encounter, the deadly sensation of cold within her, and a presentiment of disaster for which she could not account—she rushed towards the door, and her outstretched left hand, finding the switch, flooded the room with light. Mechanically she turned her head to the room—it was empty. Bewildered, she looked back over her left shoulder, and there, within a foot of her, stood Jimmy Chichester, his arms stretched across the door.

"Jimmy," she cried, "don't be silly! Come out, or let me out!"

"You must give me a favour first," he said sombrely.

"Of course I will, but I haven't got one here."

"I thought you always had favours to give away?"

"Jimmy, what do you mean?"

"You came unprovided?" She was silent.

"I did not. I have something here to give you—a small token. Only I must have a *quid pro quo*."

"He's mad!" thought Marion. "I must humour him as far as I can."

"Very well," she said, looking round the room. Jenny would forgive her—it was an emergency. "May I give you this silver pencil?"

He shook his head.

"Or this little vase?"

Still he refused.

"Or this calendar?"

"The flight of time doesn't interest me."

"Then what can I tempt you with?"

"Something that is really your own—a kiss."

"My dear," said Marion trembling, "you needn't have asked for it."

"Thank you," he said. "And to prove I don't want something for nothing, here is your favour."

He felt in his pocket. Marion saw a dark silvery gleam; she held out her hand for the gift. It was a revolver.

"What am I to do with this?" she asked.

"You are the best judge of that," he replied. "Only one cartridge has been used."

Without taking her eyes from his face she laid the revolver among the bric-à-brac on the table by her side.

"And now your gift to me."

"But what about our masks?" said Marion.

"Take yours off," he commanded.

"Mine doesn't matter," said Marion, moving, as she spoke, the silken visor. "But you are wearing an entirely false face."

"Do you know why?" he asked, gazing at her fixedly through the slits in the mask. She didn't answer.

"I was always an empty-headed fellow," he went on, tapping the waxed covering with his gloved forefinger, so that it gave out a wooden, hollow sound. "There's nothing much behind this. No brains to speak of, I mean. Less than I used to have, in fact."

Marion stared at him in horror.

"Would you like to see? Would you like to look right into my mind?"

"No! no!" she cried wildly.

"But I think you ought to," he said, coming a step nearer and raising his hands to his head.

"Have you seen Marion?" said Jane Manning to her husband. "I've a notion she hasn't been enjoying herself. This was in a sense her party, you know. We made a mistake to give her Tommy Cardew as a partner; he doesn't carry heavy enough guns for her."

"Why? Does she want shooting?" enquired her husband.

"Idiot! But I could see they didn't get on. I wonder where she's got to—I'm afraid she may be bored."

"Perhaps she's having a quiet talk with a howitzer," her husband suggested.

Jane ignored him. "Darling, it's nearly twelve. Run into the ante-room and fetch her; I don't want her to miss the final figure."

In a few seconds he returned. "Not there," he said. "Not there, my child. Sunk by a twelve-inch shell, probably."

"She may be sitting out in the corridor."

"Hardly, after a direct hit."

"Well, look." They went away, and returned with blank faces. The guests were standing about talking; the members of the band, their hands ready on their instruments, looked up enquiringly.

"We shall have to begin without her," Mrs. Manning reluctantly decided. "We shan't have time to finish as it is."

The hands of the clock showed five minutes to twelve.

The band played as though inspired, and many said afterwards



"There, within a foot of her, stood Jimmy Chichester, his arms stretched across the door."

that the cotillon never got really going, properly warmed up, till those last five minutes. All the fun of the evening seemed to come to a head, as though the spirit of the dance, mistrustful of its latter-day devotees, had withheld its benison till the final moments. Everyone was too excited to notice, as they whirled past, that the butler was standing in one of the doorways with a white and anxious face. Even Mrs. Manning, when at last she saw him, called out cheerfully, almost

without pausing for an answer: "Well, Jackson, everything all right, I hope?"

"Can I speak to you a moment, Madam?" he said. "Or perhaps Mr. Manning would be better."

Mrs. Manning's heart sank. Did he want to leave?

"Oh, I expect I shall do, shan't I? I hope it's nothing serious."

"I'm afraid it is, Madam; very serious."

"All right; I'll come." She followed him on to the landing.

A minute later her husband saw her threading her way towards him. "Jack! Just a moment."

He was dancing, and affected not to hear. His partner's eyes looked surprised and almost resentful, Mrs. Manning thought; but she persisted none the less.

"I know I'm a bore, and I'm sorry, but I really can't help myself."

This brought them to a stand. "Why, Jane, has the boiler burst?"

"No, it's more serious than that, Jack," she said, as he disengaged himself from his partner with an apology, "there's been a dreadful accident or something at the Chillingworths'. That guest of theirs—do you remember?—whom they were to have brought and didn't—"

"Yes, he stayed behind with a headache—rotten excuse—"

"Well, he's shot himself."

"Good God! When?"

"They found him half an hour ago, apparently; but they couldn't telephone, because the machine was out of order, and had to send."

"Is he dead?"

"Yes, he blew his brains out."

"Do you remember his name?"

"The man told me. He was called Chichester."

They were standing at the side of the room, partly to avoid the dancers, partly to be out of earshot. The latter consideration need not have troubled them, however. The band, which for some time past had been playing nineteenth-century waltzes, now burst into the strains of "John Peel." There was a tremendous sense of excitement and climax. The dancers galloped by at break-neck speed; the band played *fortissimo*; the volume of sound was terrific. But, above the din, the music, the laughter and the thud of feet, they could just hear the clock striking twelve.

Jack Manning looked doubtfully at his wife. "Should I go and tell Chillingworth now? What do you think?"

"Perhaps you'd better—it seems so heartless. Break it to him as gently as you can, and don't let the others know."

Jack Manning's task was neither easy nor agreeable, and he was a born bungler. Despairing of making himself heard, he raised his hand and cried out "Wait a moment!" Some of the company stood still, and, imagining it was a signal to take off their masks, began to do so; others went on dancing; others stopped and stared. He was the centre of attention; and before he had got his message fairly delivered it had reached ears other than those for which it was intended. An excited whispering went round the room: "What is it? What is it?" Men and women stood about with their masks in their hands, and faces blanker than before they were uncovered. Others looked terrified and incredulous. A woman came up to Jane Manning and said: "What a dreadful thing for Marion Lane!"

"Why?" Jane asked.

"Didn't you know? She and Jimmy Chichester were the greatest friends. At one time it was thought—"

"I live out of the world. I had no idea," said Jane quickly. Even in the presence of calamity she felt a pang that her friend had not confided in her.

Her interlocutor persisted: "It was talked about a great deal. Some people said—you know how they chatter—that she

didn't treat him quite fairly. I hate to make myself a busybody, Mrs. Manning, but I do think you ought to tell her; she ought to be prepared."

"But I don't know where she is!" cried Jane, from whose mind all thought of her friend had been banished. "Have you seen her?"

"Not since the sheet incident."

"Nor have I."

Nor, it seemed, had anyone. Disturbed by this new misadventure far more than its trivial nature seemed to warrant, Jane hastened in turn to such of her guests as might be able to enlighten her as to Marion's whereabouts. Some of them greeted her enquiry with a lift of the eyebrows, but none of them could help her in her quest. Nor could she persuade them to take much interest in it. They seemed to have forgotten that they were at a party and owed a duty of responsiveness to their hostess.

Their eyes did not light up when she came near. One and all they were discussing the suicide, and suggesting its possible motive. The room rustled with their whispering, with the soft hissing sound of "Chichester" and the succeeding "Hush!" which was meant to stifle, but only multiplied and prolonged it. Jane felt that she must scream.

All at once there was silence. Had she screamed? No, for the noise they had all heard came from somewhere inside the house. The room seemed to hold its breath. There it was again, and coming closer; a cry, a shriek, the shrill tones of terror alternating in a dreadful rhythm with a throaty choking sound like whooping-cough. No one could have recognised it as Marion Lane's voice, and few could have told for Marion Lane the dishevelled figure, mask in hand, that lurched through the doorway and, with quick, stumbling steps, before which the onlookers fell back, zig-zagged into the middle of the room.

"Stop him!" she gasped. "Don't let him do it!" Jane Manning ran to her.

"Dearest, what is it?"

"It's Jimmy Chichester," sobbed Marion, her head rolling about on her shoulders as if it had come loose. "He's in there. He wants to take his mask off, but I can't bear it! It would be awful! Oh, do take him away!"

"Where is he?" someone asked.

"Oh, I don't know! In Jane's sitting-room, I think. He wouldn't let me go. He's so cold, so dreadfully cold."

"Look after her, Jane," said Jack Manning. "Get her out of here. Anyone coming with me?" he asked, looking round. "I'm going to investigate."

Marion caught the last words. "Don't go," she implored. "He'll

hurt you." But her voice was drowned in the scurry and stampede of feet. The whole company was following their host. In a few moments the ball-room was empty.

Five minutes later there were voices in the ante-room. It was Manning leading back his troops. "Barring, of course, the revolver," he was saying, "and the few things that had been knocked over, and those scratches on the door, there wasn't a trace. Hullo!" he added, crossing the threshold, "what's this?"

The ball-room window was open again; the curtains fluttered wildly inwards; on the boards lay a patch of nearly melted snow.

Jack Manning walked up to it. Just within the farther edge, near the window, was a kind of smear, darker than the toffee-coloured mess around it, and roughly oval in shape.

"Do you think that's a footmark?" he asked of the company in general. No one could say.

THE END.



"He's in there. He wants to take his mask off, but I can't bear it! It would be awful."

Making a man of him.



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"The flame was close over the tomb when it faltered, turned aside, and then dived quickly. It fell plumb on the parchment. . . ."

THE SIN OF THE GREAT CHARLES.

A MEDIÆVAL LEGEND

By H. F. M. PRESCOTT.

(Author of "The Unhurrying Chase," "The Lost Fight," etc.)

Illustrated by EDWARD OSMOND.

THE Emperor Charles—they call him Charlemagne now—sat on an ivory chair in the garden of his palace. He had a prodigious great crown on his head; it stood up like a city wall, and it was garnished with jewels that mountains had travailed to fashion; in his hand he held his sceptre of pure gold to whose top clung a golden eagle with emerald eyes. Round about him stood his peers and paladins, his bishops and clerks and learned men; they stood very quiet in the early summer twilight, and with anxious tact they avoided the Emperor's glance, which was now downcast, now wandering, but always testy. When they thought it safe, they looked him over, gently and hastily, as though they hoped to read his trouble written somewhere upon him.

For the Emperor had a secret trouble. That everyone had cause to know, but none knew more. Thierry of Alsace had thought he knew. He said it must be that the Emperor still mourned Roland and the good knights slain at Roncesvaux. He had gone to Master Eginhard and persuaded him to write a moving epitaph for the whole lot of them, "and then," said Thierry, "you must go and sing it to Charles, and he will be comforted as Saul was comforted at David's singing." "Sing?" answered Master Eginhard, "have you ever heard me sing?" Thierry had not, but he said that the epitaph would have just the same effect if Eginhard took it and read it clearly to the Emperor.

So Eginhard composed it, and wrote it out neatly on parchment, and one afternoon when Charles said it was too hot to go out hunting, Eginhard read it to him. But it did not move the Emperor to any healing tears. All that he said when Master Eginhard finished was—"Doggerel!"

Then the Bishop of Cologne confided to the Bishop of Bordeaux, *sub rosa*, and over a dish of early cherries, that he had guessed the cause of the Emperor's moods. He took some time to expound his idea because he thought that it called for the shy obscurity of classical allusion; so that the Bishop of Bordeaux, who was not a very good scholar, did not get the hang of it at once. But the gist of the Bishop of Cologne's diagnosis was that Charles must be in love.

The two bishops decided that it would be better to get a secular opinion on their theory, so they turned to the Count of Anjou. He said that there might be something in it, and next time he took the household accounts to the Emperor for approval, he led the conversation round, rather abruptly, from the bad quality of bacon to the inconveniences suffered by a widower in the management of his affairs, and so, *via* the general dreariness of such a man's life, to the numbers of high-born and charming damsels that one noticed about the Court these days. The Emperor interrupted him here with asperity. He said that the Count of Anjou, at his age, ought to be ashamed to talk

like that. "And please to understand," said Charles, "that it is a subject that does not interest *me*."

After this failure, the Court tried what hunting would do. Out they went into the early fresh morning, all blue and green with summer, the horses snorting with delight and pride, and the dogs questing and snuffing and tugging at their leashes. The footmen ran shouting, the knights rode tootling on their curled horns; even the deer seemed anxious to oblige the Emperor, and were infallibly but not too easily killed, and when killed were the fattest and finest ever seen. But the Emperor lagged in the hunt. Very often he did not even come up at the end to look at the buck which had nobly died to give him sport.

Someone even suggested a war against the Saxons, and that was indeed a counsel of desperation, for Saxon wars were most cheerless and uncomfortable. You rode through thick and generally damp forests, and if you escaped an arrow in your neck or a slit throat—the Saxons had very long knives and were neat workmen in a camp at night—you stood to gain nothing, for the Saxons' towns were mud and wattle, and all your spoil was a three-legged stool or a log cradle or an old iron cooking-pot. So it was not an unmixed disappointment to the Court when Charles said, "Devil take the Saxons!"

So Pentecost approached, a joyful season; but with the lengthening days the Emperor's temper grew shorter.

At last came the dawn of that most holy Sunday. From every tower the bells shouted to rouse up the sun, lest by chance he might oversleep that happy morning. But he did not. He rose to time, in a flush of pale rose and deep gold, and climbing higher into the faint sky, he fulfilled it with a laughing, shining blue. In all the streets of the town priests and monks were astir; hordes of the faithful hurried out to follow the golden crosses that jolted along at the head of the processions, and loud and valiantly they sang their hymns, though it was difficult to keep in tune because of the bells. Everyone was happy. Everyone had had their consciences clean-scoured in confessional only the day before, and were now rejoicing in an unusual sense of virtuous lightness.

Only at the palace there was consternation. For Charles still lay in bed. He had driven the servants away with the blast of his imperial fury; he had hitched the purple silk coverlet, embroidered with golden peacocks, right up to his ears; and he had rolled over in bed again with his back to the world in a tight, unapproachable bundle. "I am not going to Mass," he had said, and that was the end.

Even when they had left him and the palace had grown very quiet, so that any small sound made it seem emptier, Charles did not move, but lay still, wrapped tight in purple silk and golden peacocks, and watched the tall, round-topped strip of cheerful sunshine slide along the wall towards him. That it was a fine day made it all the worse; he had all

(Continued overleaf.)



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"Out they went into the early fresh morning, all blue and green with summer, the horses snorting with delight and pride, and the dogs questing and snuffing and tugging at their leashes."

the sensations of a small boy sent to bed for naughtiness while the others have gone off to a picnic.

He wanted to go to Mass, and he could not go. That was bad enough. But there was a sharper prick. Everyone would know that he had not gone; everyone would wonder why; they would all talk about it, and they would guess. He writhed in bed. They would guess — they must guess why. They would be sure to guess that he could not go to Mass because he had committed a Sin.

When the Court came back from Mass they heard that the Emperor was up and dressed. With some alarm they heard that he now sat on his throne in the great hall. But, the servants said, he only wanted his bishops there, so the knights and the clerks and the poor priests sighed with relief and hurried off to breakfast. The bishops had to put a cheerful face on it and wait upon their Emperor. There, when they had taken their places in the half-empty hall, with the gay sun shining in and the fresh rushes smelling of summer evenings, Charles announced to them that he could not go to Mass because of his sin. Said the Archbishop of Cologne, in the awkward silence that followed: "Then, lord and son, you must confess and receive absolution."

Charles turned his eyes upon the Archbishop. "And to whom," he asked, "should such an Emperor as I confess?"

The bishops looked at each other. If the Emperor put it that way . . . to whom indeed! One very young bishop—he was some sort of relation to Charles—giggled. "It must be a most awful sin," he said, and then put his hand over his mouth because Charles looked his way.

"Lord and son," said the Bishop of Orleans, "you might confess it to the Apostle at Rome."

"Pooh!" said Charles.

After that there was silence for some time except for the pleasant sounds of breakfast from across the yard. A cook went by with a dish of chickens and another with a dish of eels. The bishops were aware of savoury smells and knew their capacity for chicken with eels to follow. But the Emperor waited calmly. He had breakfasted.



"He led the conversation round, rather abruptly, from the bad quality of the bacon . . . to the numbers of high-born and charming damsels about the Court . . ."



"He had hitched the purple silk coverlet, embroidered with golden peacocks, right up to his ears."

then dived quickly. It fell plumb on the parchment; it seized, it ate it up. Saint Gilles, like the gentleman he was, had dealt with the Emperor's confession—in confidence.

"Thank you, Gilles," said the great Charles.

[THE END.]

At last, the Bishop of Bordeaux, an unlearned man but no fool, made a suggestion. Charles reflected, nodded, and rose.

"That will serve," he said with majesty.

While the bishops breakfasted, the Emperor retired to his room to write. He had a double guard posted at the door, and every man put his head as close as he could to the keyhole, but all they could hear was the squeak of a goose-quill pen, and sometimes the sound of the Emperor mumbling to himself, and sometimes the careful tearing up of parchment. When Charles came out, he held a small folded slip in his hand. It was sealed with his seal. The guards looked straight down their noses.

That morning the Cathedral was abnormally crowded. Every bishop of the Empire was in the choir, and the great nave was full of the laymen, shoulder to shoulder with each other, and with the painted saints along the walls. From his stall beside the Archbishop of Cologne, the Emperor stepped; he wore his crown and carried in one hand the sceptre with the green-eyed eagle. In the other hand he had a small bit of parchment.

He reached the tomb of Saint Gilles, and stopped. "Saint Gilles," he said, and tapped gently on the lid of the marble tomb, "Saint Gilles, I confess to you. Here is my Sin." He laid the parchment on the tomb, but his hand still lingered over it. "Mind you," he added, "this is in confidence." Reluctantly, and with an apprehensive eye on the small sealed slip that contained his sin, he stepped back, one pace, two, three. No one else moved, and no one spoke.

Then someone gasped. There was a light in the air above the tomb, a wisp of orange flame. It was drifting down slowly, like a falling leaf, dawdling and twisting. It sauntered through the air so deviously that it might land anywhere; the bishops made themselves as narrow as possible.

The flame was close over the tomb when it faltered, turned aside, and

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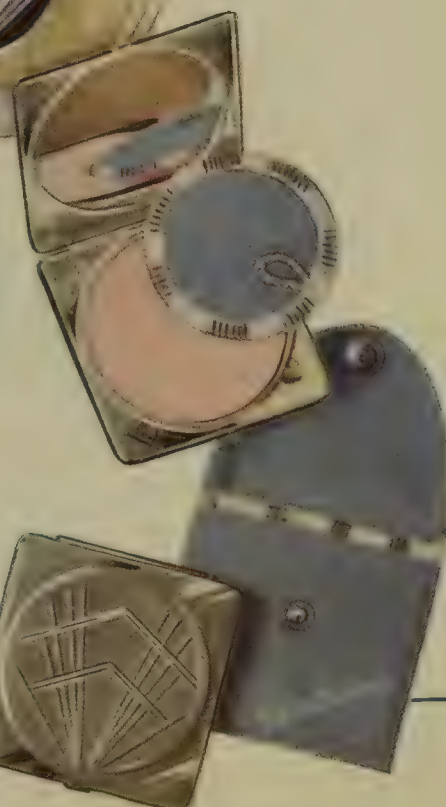


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LAST YEAR'S SNOW.

By
ELISABETH KYLE.

WITH ten girls behind her dressed up like white marabout muffs, doing cartwheels. A clever little thing. What was her name again?" Linklater looked enquiringly across the table towards the other, who shook his head. "I can't remember, either. Funny that, when we were all so crazy about her once. But I know I went every night one leave to the show she was in, just to see her."

"I went nine times to see the 'Bing Boys' myself." Linklater flicked off the ash from his cigarette and stared down unseeingly into

is a singer. She is an actress, an artist. One calls her a dancer because there is no other way of expressing her art, but she's herself. Overpowering. Arresting. You have seen her, of course?"

Kames shook his head. "My theatre days are over. I patronised your shows at the Capitoline so religiously during the war that my appreciative sense is quite worn out. So's Linklater's. It would be throwing a pearl before swine."

"All the same, I advise you to go. We cross over to Paris next week, and then La Carmina begins her world tour. Who knows when she will return?"

With a smile and a nod, the big man took himself off. They watched his retreating back almost wistfully. He was one of the last links with those days when one made up riotous, rackety parties for the Capitoline Follies. And now, after ten years' disappearance, here he was again, fatter, blander, richer than ever, playing this new world's game superbly while two old soldiers fresh from the veldt kept fumbling their racquets and missing.

"Must be something to do with the Spanish temperament," Linklater commented. "Good at a come-back, you know." There was a pause. "Remember that little Spanish dancer he had with his '16 Follies? She was another who was going to set the world on fire, but nobody's heard of her since. Like a bit of quicksilver on the stage—"

"Yes; in fact I knew her rather well at one time. Frightfully superstitious. The papers were always telling how if anything threatened her she would put a tortoise-shell comb blessed by the Pope between her teeth to avert danger. Things like that— You are sure you've finished? Then let's get a move on."

The two men regained the street and began to walk towards Shaftesbury Avenue. The world jostled past them, honking and creaking in taxis, glaring fierce lights in their eyes. An unreal world that had gone on since the Armistice, leaving them far behind. They moved closer to one another, feeling a terrible loneliness. Perez's toy, the Capitoline, was facing them; "La Carmina" outlining it in letters



"LADIES FIRST."

From the Picture by S. B. Pearse.

Piccadilly. He was looking once more into darkened streets where the women one met were uniformed themselves or wore queer high-waisted suits, with hats cutting straight across their brows; and everyone was rushing a trifle hysterically from one thing to another in case, suddenly, the things stopped altogether.

The vision of London twelve to fourteen years ago dimmed, letting through the glaring, synthetic London of to-day, with its jewelled hoardings spouting colour through the dark. His shoulders contracted a little, as though up there in the glassed-round roof-garden the night had grown suddenly cold.

"Doesn't it strike you as pathetic, somehow, the way we circled like moths about these little girls I can see dancing now; and to-day who ever hears of them? A fashion for going to see this one or that during leave, and now—why, even the fellows who took them out most can't remember their names! What's happened to them, tell me that?" He looked almost defiantly towards Kames.

The other smiled. "*Où sont les neiges d'antan?* You needn't get so hot about it, everything's an affair of memory. One's memory is like an exposed plate; the last thing makes the sharpest impression, blurring the others. I dare say those little actresses had as much talent as most, but their novelty couldn't last for ever. Others came on and— Here's Perez coming to speak to us."

A huge, sleepy-eyed man was shouldering his way past the diners. As soon as he saw they had noticed him, he waved a fat hand. "Not back to South Africa yet?"

"Our farm can look after itself pretty well, and this new London's interesting."

"It's almost as new to me. Since the Armistice I have been over in Argentina and Rio, travelling about, staging big things—spectacular—" He spread out his hand again with the well-known gesture.

Linklater laughed. "They call you the Spanish Cochran, don't they? Well, you've made a great come-back, Perez. I hear that new dancer in your show's a wonderful success. Everyone's going to see her."

Perez fixed his black eyes impressively upon them. "Listen while I tell you. La Carmina is not a dancer any more than Guilbert



"A NEIGHBOURLY KISS."

From the Picture by S. B. Pearse.

of scarlet fire. "Let's go in, after all," Linklater suggested. Kames nodded. They might as well.

There was a turn on at the moment, but nobody seemed to be paying much attention. An atmosphere of impatience so loaded the house that one wondered how the coloured man singing there on the stage could go on in the face of such inattention. At last the dancer's number was signalled. There was a pause, and the lights went up to allow of newcomers finding their seats; newcomers who intended to see her, and then to leave again immediately afterwards. The great plush boxes on either side filled miraculously, as did the stalls, as though someone behind the scenes were pouring out of a funnel this inexhaustible stream of perfectly-groomed men and women who found it so

[Continued overleaf.]



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LAST YEAR'S SNOW.—(Continued from Page 52.)

impossible to be anywhere before ten o'clock. The theatre was awake now. People were standing in knots round the doors, for there was no more room anywhere. The lights died down again. There was no backcloth, only a vast velvet curtain before which a woman paced to and fro, to and fro, as though she had been there unnoticed for long; as though she had no more to do with them than they with her. She was shabbily dressed, over-painted, enormously fat, and not young. "Surely not the Spanish dancer," Kames whispered, peering at his programme. But something like a deep sigh of fulfilment had gone up from the hoarse at the sight of her. And the programme said "Dance of the Madrid Street-Beggar."

Now the woman began to dance, slowly, clumsily, hardly more than a few vague, beseeching gestures. A pair of castanets clicked dispiritedly now and then, as though striving to attract attention. Only her eyes moved constantly over an invisible stream of passers-by. And before the eyes of her real audience she built up the strange, grotesque dance into the tragedy of poverty itself.

Then, in a moment, she disappeared behind the curtain as silently as she had come. Presently she came back, this time with more formality, in the Dance of the Court Lady. Wearing a gorgeous stiffened robe of the sixteenth century, she looked like a Velasquez stepped out of its frame. Again they were not at first conscious of her dancing; she merely stood or moved a little now and then with clumsy dignity, expressing in her looks and slightest gesture the glory of old Spain as surely as, a few minutes before, she had expressed its misery and degradation.

But gradually they became conscious of the muted violins playing a pavane, and that she was indeed dancing a subtle rhythmic dance in which the placing and withdrawing of her red-heeled slipper below her brocade skirt played its own part, and even so slight a movement as the faint click of an unfurling fan marked an accent more surely even than the vulgar rattling of castanets.

"That woman's a genius," whispered Linklater; "doesn't she make mere youth and—and cartwheels look cheap after all?"

And suddenly it happened. There was a scuffle; somebody cried "Fire!"; a streak of flame licked its way up the velvet curtain like a snake, while the horrified audience looked on. The dancer stood transfixed, hands on her breast. Linklater and Kames were near enough to see how sudden fear sharpened her too florid features, giving them a fleeting look of youth. Then in a flash she had seized a comb out of her hair and was holding it between her teeth.

"Maddalina!" Linklater exclaimed. "I remember now——"

The safety curtain rattled down, hiding her. A man jumped up from the orchestra and told people to remain in their seats, as the small outbreak of fire had been extinguished. The music began again.

"I must see her," Linklater had risen and was pushing past people regardless of their discomfort, and when they gained the door—"To think of that slender, laughing little thing putting on fat—growing old——"

"All Spanish women age quickly, you must remember, and it's twelve years since you saw her last. Besides, don't forget she's an infinitely greater artist now. Did you care a hang what she looked like just now while you watched her?"

Linklater did not answer. He had reached the passage leading to her dressing-room, had given his card to an attendant, was waiting for a reply. Presently it came. "Madame regrets that she cannot remember your name, but if you will come this way she will see whether she recollects your face." The dressing-room was vast and untidy, with a great many mirrors, and a statuette of St. Teresa on a niche in one corner. La Carmina sat at her dressing-table, more gross and immense than ever now that one was close to her, trying to repair the ravages of fright with a hares-foot held in one hand.

"You've still got Teresa," Linklater nodded towards the figure, trying to speak calmly. "I sent you roses every day for three weeks for you to leave at her feet."

"Ah!" The woman turned round, gazing at him intently. "You were one of the nice boys who used to take me about during the war. I remember you now. Link—later. But, Dios, how grey you have grown!"

"We've all changed, Maddalina," he spoke grimly.

She put out her hand in protest. "Don't call me that. Perez, my husband, says all the past must be forgotten. He will be angry when he hears of the comb. You would not have known me but for that, would you?" He shook his head.

"Queer how quickly everyone forgets." She spoke almost casually, not as though regretting it. "Perez is very clever. He counted on that when he married me and took me out of London. 'Maddalina,' he said, 'you are the rage now, and just because of that you will all the sooner be forgotten.' But you have genius to be developed; it is wicked that people should pay no attention to your genius just because you have a beautiful body." So he took me away with him to South America, and he made me study hard, develop myself. Then, when it was certain everyone had forgotten Maddalina, he brought me back, a novelty, more to the sophisticated cultured taste of this new age that is tired of just little dancing girls. He is a clever man, Perez."

"Very," Linklater muttered, moving towards the door. There he turned, and said: "So you don't want anyone to know that Maddalina and La Carmina are the same?"

"My dear fellow, who would care now? You do not realise that Maddalina means less to them to-day than Rachel or Taglioni meant to us. A little Spanish dancer who amused the boys on leave during the Great War. . . . Because you were ungallant enough to say you only remembered me through my pet superstition, I will be frank enough to say I never would have remembered you except for St. Teresa's roses——"

Seeing his discomfited face, she burst out laughing, her laugh the only part of the old Maddalina left; and then, with a nod of farewell, picked up the haresfoot again.

[THE END.]



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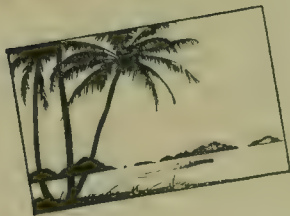
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THE TEMPLE OF GHOSTS

(Continued from Page 2.)

the jungle, over which the full moon shone coldly. At the head was Mannering, carrying a lighted lantern. He walked without his boy, for by now he was stronger; also he had taken the precaution to swallow a stiff bracer before leaving the bungalow. Behind him came Nai Soan, and he, in turn, was followed by forty raftsmen. Arrived at a point some fifty yards from the Temple of Ghosts, Mannering halted.

"Here," he told the raftsmen, "will you remain. You may wait for a long time, but wait you must, and methinks you shall have strange tales to tell of this night."

They huddled together in an uneasy group, and the white man flashed his lantern on to Nai Soan. "And now do we two go on," he said evenly.

The pair rounded a bend in the tiny jungle path, and the crumbled building walled up on the right. They passed through the remains of the courtyard and entered the temple. The lantern swung round the building. The worn roof was festooned with spiders' webs, which waved in the draught like long, white shrouds, and the shadows danced eerily. Softly the lantern was placed on the floor, and each man sat down on either side of it.

The vigil had begun. Neither spoke. Mannering stared fixedly before him, while the raftsmen looked at the space between his



"With his eyes dilating, he turned his head towards the sound, and his brain reeled with horror. Clawing round the rim of the hole was a pair of hands."

feet. Though Nai Soan's face was devoid of expression, a small pulse in the bare brown throat showed that his heart was beating violently. Every now and then a faint breeze swept through the temple, sending the lantern flickering and those eerie shadows jumping on the walls again.

As time went on, the strain of the intense hush began to tell, for the features of the Siamese became drawn, and slight tremors shook his bronzed form. He glanced at his companion, sitting quiet as a statue, and a great desire for conversation assailed him. "Lord," he whispered hoarsely, "this is an evil place, and we have stayed here long enough. If we both could go . . ."

Mannering, neither by sound nor movement, betrayed that he had heard the other's voice. Actually, the cold damp was bringing on his malaria once more, and he was fighting against a spinning brain. Also, he had another reason for not speaking. His silence frightened the Siamese. Perhaps, the raftsmen thought, the white man was communing with devils; perhaps he was in touch with the spirit of a certain Lao woman who had been poisoned; perhaps . . .

Suddenly, Nai Soan's heart leapt into his throat, for a queer noise had sounded from the direction of a large hole that gaped in the back of the building. With his eyes dilating, he turned his head towards the sound, and his brain reeled with horror. Clawing

(Continued overleaf.)

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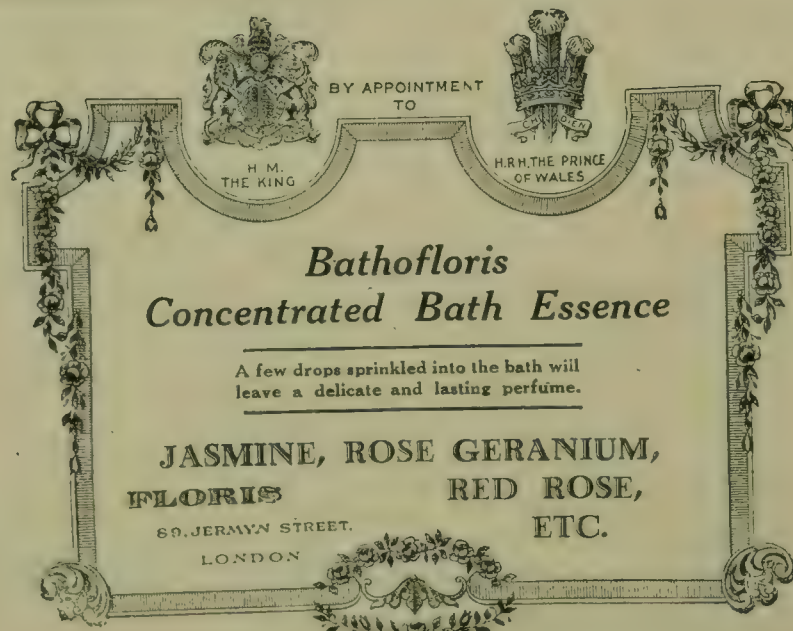
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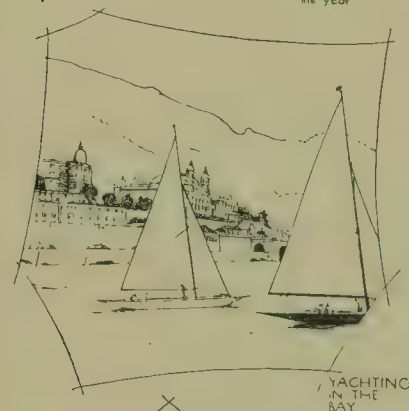
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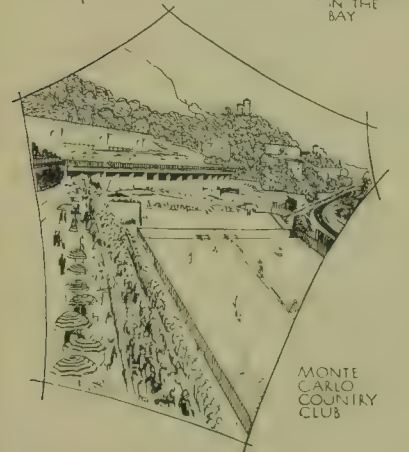
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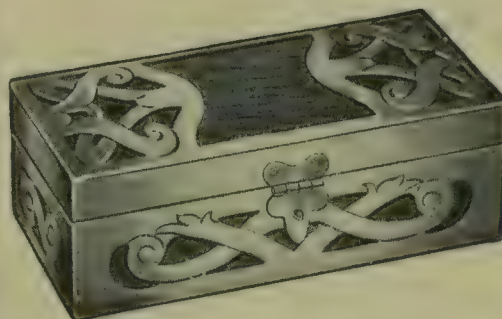
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Continued from Page vi.]

round the rim of the hole was a pair of hands. The hands were just visible in the dim light of the lantern, though the body, if body there were, was concealed behind the masonry.

"Lord," gasped Nai Soan. "The hands! See, they . . ."

"I see nothing," replied Mannering calmly, though his eyes took in the outline of the fingers quite plainly. "Still, the light seems to frighten thee. We will have no more light."

And he blew out the lantern. Utter darkness enveloped the pair, and soon a faint "whEEP, whEEP" of bare feet approaching over the stone slabs could be heard.

"Master"—Soan's voice rose to a sharp staccato—"where are you?"

"I am here," said Mannering, and his voice came not from the direction of the feet. A puff of dank, icy wind blew through the ruins, and as the raftsmen felt its clammy breath, he sat literally frozen with fear.

The steps came nearer and nearer, and then a pair of hands, cold as death, were gripping him round the throat. With the strength of a maniac, he tore them off him. He flung to his feet, and a queer, jangling laugh burst from his lips as he fled anyhow, anywhere, into the blackness of the jungle surrounding the temple. Gradually the echoes died away, and silence fell on the forest.

Mannering rose, re-lit the lantern, then walked out of the temple and joined the waiting villagers, who stood in a terrified cluster.

"Lord," whispered one, "we have heard queer laughter, like the laughter of the spirit of madness, go echoing through the forest."

"It was the laughter of Nai Soan," said Mannering grimly. "Whither he has fled I know not, but I do know that he is a brave man no longer."

His hearers fell on their knees. "Lord," they quavered, "protect us, for terrible devils are abroad to-night."

"To-morrow is Saturday," said Mannering sternly. "And on that day shall the rafts go down as I have ordered."

"Master, they shall go," they agreed fearfully.

"And now come back with me to Ban Huat, for much work awaits you in the morning."

He led the terrified, humbled mob back to their homes, then walked on to his own bungalow. As he entered the bed-room, his brain was spinning with fever, and he flung himself fully dressed upon the bed, where he lay in a semi-coma till he was aroused by the sudden entry of the boy, Ai Meeung. The servant was breathing hard, and his dark body was stained with sweat.

"Lord," he gasped, "things have happened to-night which we did not plan, and which I do not understand. If the Master could explain . . ."

Mannering raised himself up on one elbow. "Explain?" he echoed uncertainly. "There's nothing to explain. You played your part well, Ai Meeung."

Ai Meeung's eyes narrowed. "Master, I tell you what happen to me, then perhaps you will explain. Now, I do as you bid. I go secretly through the jungle, taking care that no one see me, and when I near the Temple of Ghosts I soak my hands in a cold pool, even as you commanded me. As I do this I hear a strange laugh echo through the forest, the like of which I never heard before. But I am not afraid, and I go to the hole in the wall of the temple; but, Master, I see no light inside, and you had told me there would be a light there, at least to begin with. I wait a little, then go into the temple, but neither you nor Nai Soan were there. So I hasten back here to the bungalow, as I do not understand what happen."

A long pause followed, then Mannering spoke. "In my own case—fever and imagination," he said in English. "In Nai Soan's—imagination plus funk. Still, I could have sworn I saw those hands. Queer, queer."

"The Master speaks?" asked Ai Meeung respectfully.

"Ai Meeung," said Mannering, breaking into the native tongue, "it would appear that for thine own sake thou shouldst never sleep in the Temple of Ghosts."

"Lord," answered the boy, as enlightenment dawned, "though I am a good man, I am taking no chances."

"And now, Ai Meeung, bring me a large brandy and a very small soda," said Mannering with feeling.

Next morning the rafts went down to Bangkok, and Nai Soan went not with them, because he was mad.

THE END.

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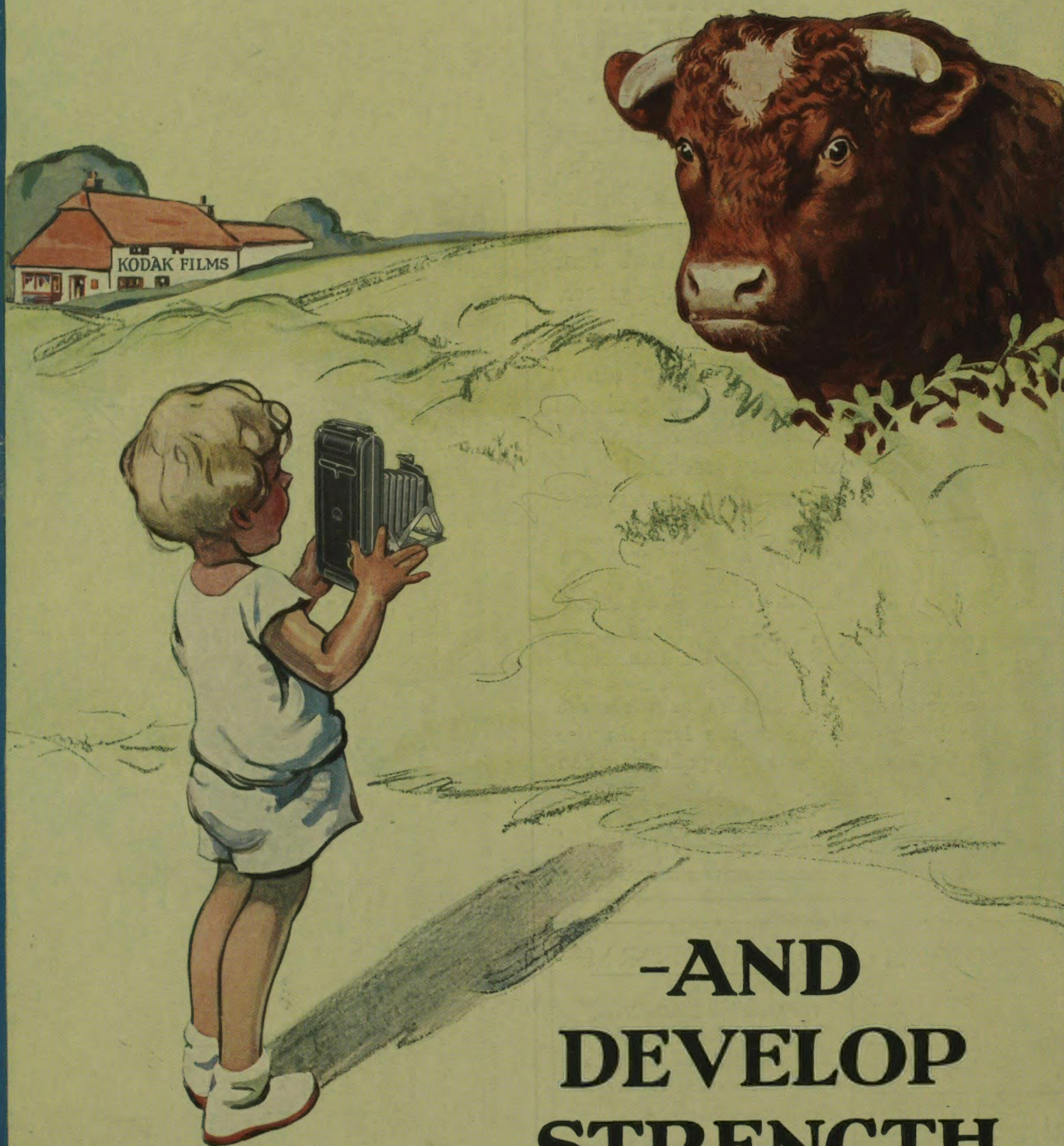
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